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RAYMOND BROWN, "THE JEWS," AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

By

SONYA CRONIN

A Dissertation submitted to the
Department of Religion
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines published work of Raymond Brown, a prominent Catholic New Testament scholar, between the years 1960–1998 in regard to his analysis of anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John. It contextualizes his work by putting Raymond Brown's own publications in their modern historical context and examining his work in relationship to scholars working in the same period, Church statements, and other social and academic influences that might have contributed to his overall thought. Of particular focus, this study analyzes Brown's perspective on various strategies biblical scholars have used to address the problem of potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel.

Until the mid-1960s, while most interpreters of the Gospel of John were aware of a polemic against the Jews, they did not discuss it as an ethical issue of potential anti-Judaism, nor did they relate it to a concern for the modern day. However, a shift in focus in Johannine scholarship is noticeable beginning in the mid-1960s and 1970s and continuing to the present. The goal of this project is to gain insight into this shift and understand how one's analysis of the historical situation behind the Fourth Gospel is related to an ethical concern about potential anti-Judaism.

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INTRODUCTION

In the past fifty years, the issue of anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John[1] has been a growing concern. Whereas the Synoptic Gospels use specific subgroups of Jews (Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, Chief Priests, etc.) to describe those opposed to Jesus, the Gospel of John eliminates most of the subgroups and refers mainly to "the Jews" as the enemies of Jesus. In a post-Holocaust era, sensitivity towards potential anti-Judaism is not surprising. Writers like Jules Isaac[2] in the early 1960s, and following soon after, Rosemary Reuther[3] and John Palikowski[4] in the early 1970s began to raise awareness of the hostility towards the Jews in the biblical text.[5] By the end of the twentieth-century,

[1] Reimund Bieringer, Didier Pollefeyt, and Frederique Vandecasteele-Vanneuville, eds., *Anti Judaism and the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster, 2001); David Granskou, "Anti-Judaism in the Passion Accounts of the Fourth Gospel," in *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity* (eds. Peter Richardson and David Granskou; Studies in Christianity and Judaism 2; Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986), 201–16; Malcolm Lowe, "Who Were the Ἰουδαῖοι?" *Novum Testamentum.* Vol. 18, Fasc. 2. (Apr., 1976), 101–30; Adele Reinhartz, *Befriending the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Continuum, 2003); Adele Reinhartz, "The Gospel of John and How 'the Jews' Became Part of the Plot," in *Jesus, Judaism, and Christian Anti-Judaism* (eds. Paula Fredrickson and Adele Reinhartz; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 99–116; Adele Reinhartz, "John and Judaism: A response to Burton Visotzky," in *Life in Abundance* (ed. John R. Donahue; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 108–116; David Rensberger, "Anti-Judaism and the Gospel of John," in *Anti-Judaism and the Gospels* (ed. William Farmer; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), 120-157.

[2] Jules Isaac, *The Teaching of Contempt.* (trans. Helen Weaver; United States of America: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964). In this book Isaac argued that the Church had long been responsible for spreading hostility against the Jews by means of three specific teachings: the Dispersion of the Jews as a providential Punishment, the degenerate state of Judaism during the time of Jesus, and the crime of deicide. Later on, the term, "teaching of contempt," would come to mean more than the three propositions, but general teaching that negatively portrayed the Jews their role in New Testament texts.

[3] Rosemary Ruether, *Faith and Fratricide* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974).

[4] John T. Pawlikowski, *Catechetics and Prejudice: How Catholic Teaching Materials View Jews, Protestants, and Racial Minorities* (Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1974).

[5] Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, *Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966); Alan T. Davies, *Anti-Semitism and the Christian Mind* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969); Samuel Sandmel, *Anti-Semitism in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978); Alan T. Davies, *Anti-Semitism and the Foundations of Christianity,* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979); Luke T. Johnson, "The New Testament's Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic," *Journal of Biblical Literature* Volume 108, No.3 (Autumn 1989), 419–441; Craig A. Evans and Donald A. Hagner, eds., *Anti-Semitism and Early Christianity* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); John Dominic Crossan, *Who Killed*

literature focusing on anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John flourished, reflecting a rising awareness of anti-Judaism among Johannine scholars.

This project will examine published work of Raymond Brown, a prominent Catholic New Testament scholar, between the years 1960–1998.[6] It will then contextualize his work by evaluating the influence of ecclesiastical statements and the influence of earlier and contemporary Johannine scholarship on Brown's biblical interpretation, and then posit theories as to why change occurs at specific times. It will study the relationship between ecclesiastical influence[7] and biblical interpretation,[8] and explore how one might have influenced the other specifically regarding anti-Jewish awareness in the Gospel of John. More generally though, it will attempt to understand the relationship between Brown's historical findings, his theological use of these findings, and his overall sensitivity towards potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John.

Issue of Anti-Judaism in Johannine Scholarship

The Gospel of John uses the term οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι [9] 65 times, more than the Synoptic Gospels combined.[10] While some of the uses of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι are simply descriptive and essentially benign,[11] most of the uses are hostile and represent the enemies of Jesus. For

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Jesus (New York: HarperCollins, 1996); Gerd Lüdemann, *The Unholy in the Holy Scripture* (trans. John Bowden; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997); Paula Fredriksen and Adele Reinhartz., eds., *Jesus, Judaism & Christian Anti-Judaism* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002).

[6] 1960 is the date of Brown's first publication on John and 1998 is both the year he died, and the date of his last publication.

[7] On a theological level, ecclesiastical statements have been made to curtail extensions of anti-Jewish sentiment from the text into modern applications.

[8] On a historical-critical level, biblical scholars have attempted to ascertain the particular contexts, reconstruct the communities, and uncover the intent of the author that put forth potentially anti-Jewish passages.

[9] Often translated "the Jews." It can also mean Judeans, and is also interpreted by many to mean Jewish authorities.

[10] In addition to the sixty-five uses, it also uses the term οἱ Ἰουδαία (Judea) seven times.

[11] Examples are John 2:13; 4:22; 5:1; 6:4; 11:55; 18:33; 18:39; 19:19; 19:40. John 4:22 is often used as a positive use of the term "the Jews.'

example, in 5:16, "the Jews" begin to persecute Jesus because he healed a man on the Sabbath, and in 5:18 they seek to kill him because he equated himself with God.[12] In 8:44–52, one of the most hostile exchanges in John, Jesus tells "the Jews" that their father is the devil and "the Jews" accuse Jesus of being a Samaritan and having a demon. In 9:22, 19:38, and 20:19 Jews who are favorable to Jesus fear "the Jews," and in the Johannine Passion, "the Jews" press for the crucifixion of Jesus, even though Pilate tries to release him.

Until the mid-1960s, while virtually all interpreters of the Gospel of John were aware of a polemic against the Jews,[13] they did not discuss it as an ethical issue of potential anti-Judaism, nor did they relate it to a concern for the modern day. However, as awareness of this issue grew during the mid-1960s and 1970s, a shift in focus in Johannine scholarship is also noticeable. The goal of this project is to gain insight into this shift and understand how one's analysis of the historical situation behind the Fourth Gospel is related to an ethical concern about potential anti-Judaism.

Method

The method this dissertation will employ is a careful and thorough reading of eleven of Raymond Brown's publications: *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles* (1960),[14] *The Gospel According to John I–XII* (1966),[15] *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI* (1970),[16] "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19" (1975),[17]

[12] This happens again in 7:1.

[13] John does use chief priests, Pharisees, and authorities, but only minimally. Generally those hostile to Jesus are "the Jews."

[14] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1960).

[15] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966).

[16] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970).

[17] Raymond E. Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," *Worship* 49 (March 1975), 126–134.

The Community of the Beloved Disciple (1979),[18] *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (1988),[19] *Death of the Messiah* (1994),[20] *Introduction to the New Testament* (1997),[21] *A Retreat with John the Evangelist* (1998),[22] *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (1998/2003),[23] and *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean* (1997).[24]

Brown's overall list of publications is extensive.[25] These particular works were chosen using two criteria. First, some of Brown's books have been monumental contributions to the field of biblical studies. Among these are *Death of the Messiah*[26] and *Introduction to the New Testament.*[27] Even though neither book focuses on the Gospel of John, they were included in this evaluation because they do handle John in their overall discussion, and their importance in the field of New Testament is widely recognized. The rest of the publications meet a second criterion. They focus specifically on the Gospel of John. *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (1988) is a reprinted edition of *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles* (1960). The purpose of evaluating a revision separately is to track changes that Brown has made while updating older material.

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[18] Raymond E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York: Paulist, 1979).

[19] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 1988).

[20] Raymond E. Brown, *Death of the Messiah* (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, 1994).

[21] Raymond E. Brown, *Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997).

[22] Raymond E. Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist* (Cincinatti: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1998).

[23] Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (ed., Francis J. Maloney; New York: Doubleday, 2003).

[24] Raymond Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, Second Assignmnet of Raymond Brown, PBC (Pontifical Biblical Commission) Document III:5, April 1997 Meeting, 14–21.

[25] For full bibliography see Michael L. Barré, "A Bibliography of the Pulications of Raymond E. Brown, S.S. in *Life in Abundance,* (ed. John R. Donahue; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 2005), 259–289.

[26] This work while dealing with the Gospel of John does not fall in the second category simply because its purpose is an analysis and comparison of the Passions in all four Gospels. It is not work specifically focusing on the Gospel of John.

[27] *Birth of the Messiah* (1993) also falls in this category, but it will not be evaluated here because it does not deal with anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John even as a part of its larger purpose.

As we examine these publications, we will evaluate Brown's awareness of potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John throughout the years. In order to do this, we will look closely at Brown's own comments, the consistency of his evaluation,[28] how Brown handles specific terminology like "Jews" or "authorities," and how he uses the terms "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Semitic" in relation to John.

In evaluating any commentator, one tricky aspect becomes trying to distinguish what constitutes the commentator's opinions, and where they are simply reporting what they think the text communicates. In some cases, commentators make this clear by distancing themselves from the text by saying something like, "*John thinks*, the Jews are the children of the devil," rather than simply "the Jews are the children of the devil." Often however, since it is generally understood that the commentator is reporting on what he/she thinks is the author's perspective, the commentator will not insert this distance. The insertion of this distance is evidence of sensitivity on the commentator's part, especially when discussing issues that have ethical ramifications in the modern day, and we will document this in our evaluation. However, we must be careful not to make an argument from silence and assume that a lack of such distance suggests that the commentator is complicit with the sentiments of the author on whom he/she comments.

In the posthumous publication *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, Brown simplifies much of the discussion regarding anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John by stating that it rests chiefly on how John refers to "the Jews." The defining historical question regarding anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John is "Who are οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι?"[29] Thus, in

[28] For example, is his treatment of "the Jews" consistent with the way he treats others in the Gospel.

[29] Are they Synagogue *members* during the time of the author, Synagogue *leaders* during the time of the author, Judeans (regionally), or other possible subgroups of Jews active in the first century? How one answers these questions can be very important for implicating or exonerating the Gospel in regard to charges of anti-Judaism. For example, if one interprets the Gospel in such a way so as to suggest that historical Jews as represented in the Gospel of John, killed the Christ, this could have serious anti-Jewish implications, especially if "the Jews" refers to all Jews, and expands culpability to even those that exist in the modern period. On the other hand, if one reads the Gospel of John in such a way that "the Jews" represent only the religious leaders and Jesus and his followers are identified as Jews who are being persecuted by their own leaders, the implications can be quite different; an inner Jewish drama is depicted. Since Jesus was a Jew, the term "the Jews" placed on the lips of Jesus to refer to a group that is not his own is both exegetically and theologically an odd facet of the Gospel which requires some explanation.

evaluating each of Brown's works, we will pay close attention to what explanation Brown gives for John's use of the term "the Jews."

As part of the overall analysis, we will focus on particular passages and scenes from the Gospel and evaluate Brown's commentary on them as they are handled in his various publications. This allows us to measure change as Brown handles the same passages throughout the years. These include but are not limited to John 1, both the prologue material (v.10–11) and where "the Jews" inquire about John the Baptist (v.19), John 4 with Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman, John 8:44 where Jesus calls "the Jews" children of the devil, John 9 where the former blind man and his parents are in danger of excommunication from "the Jews," and John 19 with the Passion scenes between "the Jews" and Pilate.

Finally, this project will put Raymond Brown's own publications in their modern historical context by examining his work in relationship to scholars working in the same period, Church statements, and other social and academic influences that might have contributed to his overall thought. In particular, we will analyze Brown's perspective on various strategies biblical scholars have used to address the problem of potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel.

Structure

Chapter one provides background to Raymond Brown's biblical scholarship. It includes biographical information on Brown and the position of the Catholic Church in regard to the use of historical critical methods and its relationship to the Jews. It discusses the two Johannine scholars whom Brown engages most frequently in his early biblical interpretation on John: Rudolf Bultmann and C. H. Dodd. Finally, chapter one will delineate Brown's position on major issues in Johannine scholarship. Chapters two through five will analyze Brown's publications in chronological order. Each chapter will discuss major changes in Brown's life, Church statements, and major scholarly influences since the previous publication. Chapter two will discuss Brown's publications between the years 1960–1970: *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles* (1960), *The Gospel According to John I–XII* (1966), and *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*

(1970). Chapter three will evaluate Brown's publications between the years 1970–1988: "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19" (1975), *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (1979), and *The Gospel and Epistles of John* (1988). Chapter four will evaluate Brown's publications between the years 1988–1994: *Death of the Messiah* (1994), *Introduction to the New Testament* (1997), and *A Retreat with John the Evangelist* (1998). Chapter five will evaluate two posthumous works by Brown. The first is *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (1998/2003), which was compiled and edited by Brown's colleague Francis J. Maloney, S.J. The second is an unpublished work called *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean.* This was Brown's contribution to the Pontifical Biblical Commission's document *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures*. In addition to evaluating these works by Brown, chapter five will also evaluate, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures*, to determine Brown's overall contribution to that document. The conclusion to this project will evaluate Brown's analysis of other scholarship published between 1955–2000 in the context of anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND TO RAYMOND BROWN'S BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

This chapter sets into context Raymond Brown's entrance into Catholic biblical scholarship. It discusses Brown's biographical information, a brief history of the Catholic Church's approach to the Jews and its position on the historical-critical approach to biblical studies until 1965, and the two biblical scholars that most influenced Raymond Brown on the Gospel of John: Rudolf Bultmann and C. H. Dodd.

Biographical Information on Raymond Brown

Father Raymond Edward Brown, S. S., was born on May 22, 1928 in the Bronx, New York City to Reuben H. and Loretta (Sullivan) Brown.[30] Raymond Brown began his education in the Bronx, but finished his senior year of High School in Miami Shores, Florida, where his family relocated in 1944.[31] In 1945, he entered St. Charles College in Catonsville, Maryland, a college seminary program run by the Society of St. Sulpice. He later joined this community of priests.[32] In 1946 Brown transferred to The Catholic

[30] Unless otherwise stated, all biographical information on Raymond Brown is taken from Ronald D. Witherup, S.S., "Biography of Raymond E. Brown, S.S.," in *Life In Abundance*. (ed., John R. Donahue; Collegeville: Liturgical, 2005), 254–258.

[31] While there is very little information on this time of Brown's life, both the Bronx and Miami Shores had significant Jewish communities, even during the 1940s. Interestingly enough, the article "Synagogues Faded in the Northeast Bronx," Rabbi Solomon Berl (age 79) accounts for the decrease of Jews in the Bronx in recent years. He calls it the "3 M's": moveouts, mortality, and Miami. Even after moving from the Bronx, Miami Shores would have been one of the places where Brown once again in his younger years could have encountered a Jewish population. It is unclear exactly how much this may have influenced Brown overall, but it is interesting that he himself participated in a migration familiar to many New York Jews.

[32] The Sulpicians are a community inside Catholicism that is charged with the task of training new priests. Its members live in their seminaries, among their students. They are academic in nature, but not exclusively so. They are also concerned with the "spiritual formation" of their priests in training as well. St.

University of America where he became a Basselin[33] Scholar and obtained both a B.A. (1948) and M.A. (1949) in Philosophy. He went on to the Gregorian University in Rome where he continued to work in advanced seminary studies. While in Rome as a seminarian, his bishop recalled him to the United States to complete studies for the priesthood at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, Maryland. It was here at St. Mary's that Brown completed his theological training for priesthood, obtaining S.T.B. (1951) and S.T.L. (1953) degrees.[34] It was also here that Brown's talent and disposition towards biblical studies was discovered.[35]

Raymond Brown was ordained as a priest on May 23, 1953 for the Diocese of St. Augustine, Florida (following his completion of his S.T.L. degree). He was released by his bishop, Joseph Hurley, to return to the Society of St. Sulpice (which he entered formally in 1955 after completing the requirements for membership), because of his skill and interest in biblical studies. Upon his release to the Sulpicians in 1953, Brown was assigned to teach at St. Charles Seminary in Catonsville, Maryland while completing his doctoral degree in theology at St. Mary's Seminary. When he completed his S.T.D.

Mary's Seminary in Baltimore is a Sulpician seminary. Brown's affiliation with this order later will account for the initials next to his name. See http://www.sulpicians.org/whoweare/whoweare.html for more information.

[33] The Theodore B. Basselin Program is a three-year honors program in philosophy, consisting of the junior and senior years of undergraduate study and one year of graduate work. For more information see http://www.theologicalcollege.org/Basselin.html.

[34] S.T.B. degree or Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology Degree is an eight-semester degree in theological studies. The S.T.L. degree or Licentiate in Sacred Theology is an upper level degree requiring as a prerequisite the S.T.B. degree; it continues one's training for an additional four semesters in advanced theological studies. This information is current to St. Mary's Seminary, March 2007. While these programs have likely changed and been modified over time, it seems nonetheless evident that Raymond Brown's completion of these degrees in such a short time (less than four years total) displays clear academic prowess on his part.

[35] Witherup, "Biography of Raymond E. Brown, S.S.," 255: In transferring from Rome to Baltimore, Brown had to prepare on his own for certain exams as he had missed the relevant preparatory courses in the transfer. In over-preparing for an Old Testament exam, he discovered his own interests while at the same time displaying for his superiors his talent for the field. Brown described the event in an interview where he recalls, "Well, he didn't tell me how much to study, so I started reading the Old Testament and studying. I was fortunate enough to be able to read French and Italian and some German, so that actually I was reading better books than were available in English. When I took the exam, he [Brown's professor] was highly complimentary. He virtually told me, 'I didn't mean you had to know that much.' He asked me whether I was interested in the Bible. I said it was the most interesting thing I had ever done in my life; it was fascinating… The professor said, 'We do need teachers in Bible.'"

(1955) from St. Mary's, he began doctoral studies in Semitic languages at Johns Hopkins University. While there, he became the student of William Foxwell Albright. Brown completed his Ph.D. in 1958, and later completed a Baccalaureate in Sacred Scripture (S.S.B., 1959)[36] and a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome (S.S.L., 1963).[37] At the end of his doctoral studies at Johns Hopkins, Brown also spent time in Jerusalem and Jordan, working on a preliminary concordance of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Upon his return from the Middle East, the Sulpicians assigned Brown to teach at his alma mater, St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore. Brown taught at St. Mary's until 1971. It was during his time at St. Mary's that he wrote his two-volume commentary on John for Anchor Bible, which placed him in the forefront of modern biblical scholarship. In 1971, Brown moved to New York where he taught at both Jesuit Woodstock College (until 1974) and Union Theological Seminary (until his retirement[38] in 1990). After leaving Union Theological Seminary, Brown moved to Menlo Park, California, where he stayed in the Sulpician-run St. Patrick's seminary. By the time Raymond Brown died in August, 1998, he had a forty-year teaching career and over thirty honorary doctorates. He had served as president of the Catholic Biblical Association (1971–1972), the Society for Biblical Literature (1976–1977), and the Society for the Study of New Testament. He had also twice been appointed as a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission, once by Pope Paul VI in 1972 and again by Pope John Paul II in 1996.

[36] The granting of the pontifical degrees-baccalaureate, licentiate, and doctorate in Sacred Scripture (S.S.B., S.S.L., and S.S.D.) with canonical effects is reserved by the Holy See to the Pontifical Biblical Institute (in course) and the Pontifical Biblical Commission (by examination). Students may, upon completion of the Ph.D. program in Biblical Studies, sit for the examinations for the pontifical degrees in Scripture that are conducted by the Pontifical Biblical Commission. See http://trs.cua.edu/academic/grad/BiblicalStudies.cfm#PONTSS for more information.

[37] This is normally a three-year program (approx. twenty-eight semester-long courses) involving biblical languages (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, and one other Ancient Near Eastern language), theology and biblical exegesis. See http://www.biblico.it/licentiate_curr.html for more information.

[38] Brown continued to publish even after his retirement from Union Theological Seminary.

Catholic Church: Relations with the Jews in the Twentieth-Century

The Holocaust was the pivotal event that would eventually lead to a reappraisal of Catholic attitudes towards the Jews. When European Jews faced complete annihilation at the hands of Hitler's Nazi Germany, the Catholic Church was silent. The Church never issued any "official" statement condemning the atrocities committed by the German state.[39] A Papal statement may not have made a difference, but the lack of such a statement would plague the Catholic Church for decades as they would come face to face with their own impotence during one of the greatest humanitarian crises of the twentieth-century.[40]

Once the threat of Hitler was gone and the shocking reality of what he was able to accomplish in modern, Christian Europe came to light, the Catholic Church along with the rest of the world began to examine itself. It is at this time that Raymond Brown entered the field of biblical studies. Faced not only with the horror of the unraveling events of the Holocaust, but with the reality of the Church's failure to stand up for the innocent, the Catholic Church was ripe for introspection and critical reevaluation in regard to its relationship with the Jews. Guilt for past inaction became a powerful motivator for change.

This change became evident with the publication of *Nostra Aetate* in 1965, which came out of Vatican II and dealt in part with the Catholic relationship with the Jews. While the Vatican II council was not convened for the purpose of ecumenical relations, a fateful meeting between Jules Isaac and Pope John XXIII coincided with the events of the council to put the Jewish issue on the agenda.[41] This document forever changed the

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[39] Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews,* 226: Even though Pope Pius XII has been credited by some as having quietly worked to save upwards of 800,000 Jews, his notable silence in regard to official Catholic statements is of great concern.

[40] Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews,* 226: In hindsight, historians have varying opinions. Some suggest that the Vatican, by not making any official statements condemning anti-Semitism, failed the Jewish people. Others have suggested that any statement by the Pope would have had no practical influence to change the sinister form of anti-Semitism present in Germany at the time. Thus, the Pope's behind-the-scenes efforts were more successful without any official statements.

[41] Thomas Stransky, C.S.P., "The Genesis of *Nostra Aetate*," *America* 193, no.12 (October 24, 2005), 8–12: On June 5, 1960, Pope John XXIII had created the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. While the mission of this council was very vague, it had the general task of furthering Christian ecumenical relations. On June 13, that same year, the Pope met with Jules Isaac who in a twenty-minute meeting was

nature of Catholic-Jewish relations. It reaffirmed the relationship between the Church and the Jewish people by stating,

> As the sacred synod searches into the mystery of the Church, it remembers the bond that spiritually ties the people of the New Covenant to Abraham's stock.[42]

In addition, it condemned anti-Semitism and blame for the crucifixion upon future generations of Jews (essentially removing the charge of deicide that had plagued Jews for centuries), as well as presentations of the Jews as rejected or cursed. Finally, it clearly stressed that Christ died as a result of His own free will (not as a result of murder by the Jews). It states:

> Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is thus so great, this sacred synod wants to foster and recommend that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit, above all, of biblical and theological studies as well as of fraternal dialogues. True, the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ; still, what happened in His passion cannot be charged against all the Jews, without distinction, then alive, nor against the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if this followed from the Holy Scriptures. All should see to it, then, that in catechetical work or in the preaching of the word of God they do not teach anything that does not conform to the truth of the Gospel and the spirit of Christ… Besides, as the Church has always held and holds now, Christ underwent His passion and death freely, because of the sins of men and out of infinite love, in order that all may reach salvation.[43]

Later official documents, both Catholic and non-Catholic, would use *Nostra Aetate* as a foundation on which to build more defined and explicit expressions of respect

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able to give the Pope a memorandum drafted earlier in the summer by Amitié Judeo-Chrétienne, a Paris-based study group of about 60 Jews and Christians, of which Isaac was a founder. This meeting altered the course of Vatican II and put the Jewish question on the agenda. Interestingly enough, Isaac had met with Pope Pius XII on October 16, 1949 and gave him a copy of the *10 Points of Seelisberg*. This was a treatise that came out of the 1947 meeting of the World Council of Churches delineating ten previous positions of the Church that were anti-Jewish that should no longer be held. Nothing ever came from Isaac's meeting with Pope Pius XII. Raymond Brown later served on the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity from 1968–1976. See also: Neville Lamdan and Alberto Melloni, eds., *Nostra Aetate: Origins, Promulgation, Impact on Jewish Catholic Relation* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2007).

[42] Pope Paul VI, *Nostra Aetate*, 28 October 1965. n.p. [cited 8 May 2009]. Online: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html..

[43] Pope Paul VI, *Nostra Aetate,* 28 October 1965, 4.

towards Jews. However, just as it took decades for the impact of the Holocaust to settle upon the conscience of the Church, so it would take time for the impact of *Nostra Aetate* to be realized.[44] While Raymond Brown began his career prior to *Nostra Aetate,* the vast majority of his contributions were written after this momentous document was formulated. We will examine *Nostra Aetate* in more detail when dealing with Brown's 1966 publication *The Gospel According to John I–XII* in chapter two.

Nostra Aetate was only the beginning. Other statements dealing with Catholic relations with the Jews would be released later. We will discuss these other statements in chapters two through five as they coincide with Brown's publications. These are: *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (n.4)*,[45] *Relations with the Jews*,[46] *Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis,*[47] *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*,[48] and *The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures*.[49] Raymond Brown was the first Catholic to address the Commission on Faith and Order (part of the World Council of Churches, hereafter WCC) in 1963 and was later appointed to the commission in 1968. Thus, the

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[44] Raymond Brown's writings are thus valuable in this arena as we can measure the direct and indirect impact of *Nostra Aetate* over the years as we notice the subtle changes in Brown's own writings.

[45] Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (n.4)*, December 1, 1974, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009]. Note that the PCPCU was previously called the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity.

[46] Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Relations with the Jews,* 10 January 1975, n.p., [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19750110_setting-commission_en.html.

[47] Commission on the Religious Relations with the Jews, *Notes on the Correct Way to Present the Jews and Judaism in Preaching and Catechesis*, 1985, [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/relations-jews-docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19820306_jews-judaism_en.html.

[48] Commission for the Religious Relations with the Jews, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, 16 March 1998, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_16031998_shoah_en.html.

[49] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and their Sacred Scriptures,* 24 May 2001, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/pcb_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20020212_popolo-ebraico_en.html.

following statements made by the WCC or its subgroups are also relevant and will be examined as well: *The Church and the Jewish People*,[50] *Ecumenical Considerations on Jewish-Christian Dialogue*,[51] *The Churches and the Jewish People: Toward a New Understanding*,[52] and *Christian-Jewish Dialogue Beyond Canberra*.[53]

Historical Biblical Criticism in the Catholic Church: Modernist Controversy to Vatican II

While the twentieth-century reassessment of positions towards the Jews is one of the most significant Catholic ideological changes of this time, it was not an isolated occurrence. The process of reevaluating the Church's relationship with the rest of the world, both Christian and non-Christian, had already been occurring. The new position towards the Jews is one of many expressions reflective of the effort of the emerging twentieth-century Catholic Church to remain the sanctified and separate body of Christ, while at the same time integrating itself into the growing secular and scientific, modern world.

Before the Holocaust or Vatican II, the Catholic Church faced what would later be called the Modernist crisis. The scientific movement of the early twentieth-century made its impact in all realms of society. The Church was not excluded from this. Catholic "modernists" tried to integrate the new scientific discoveries with church doctrine and consequently felt the full wrath of the Catholic Church. A notable example of this was

[50] Commission for Faith and Order, *The Church and the Jewish People*, 10 August 1967, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=1490. The Commission for Faith Order is part of the World Council of Churches.

[51] World Council of Churches, *Ecumenical Considerations on Jewish-Christian Dialogue,* 16 July 1982, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=1499.

[52] Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, *The Churches and the Jewish People: Toward a New Understanding*, 5 November 1988, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=1495.

[53] Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue Beyond Canberra*, 31 August 1992, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.jcrelations.net/en/?item=1491.

Alfred Loisy.[54] Loisy, a proponent of biblical criticism, published his "Five Theses" which was firmly rejected by the Church because it went contrary to the Church's core beliefs. It stated that the Pentateuch was not the work of Moses, the first five chapters of Genesis are not literal history, and that the New Testament and the Old Testament do not possess equal historical value. Loisy went on to suggest that Church doctrines, dogmas, and traditionally held beliefs were not infallible, but were moving, changing, and forever in the process of evolution, to be reinterpreted by each successive community.[55] While innovative and consistent with the scientific mood of the early twentieth-century, this threat to the established, authoritative structure of the Catholic Church did not go unnoticed. Fear that the stability of the Church would be compromised by those less "orthodox" governed the official actions of those in Catholic leadership.

The Catholic Church responded. In the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*,[56] Pope Pius X made a sweeping condemnation of what he termed "modernism"[57] in both

[54] Alfred Firmin Loisy (1857–1940) was a French Roman Catholic priest, professor and theologian. He was a critic of traditional views of the biblical accounts of creation, and argued that biblical criticism could be applied to interpreting scripture. He was dismissed as a professor from the Catholic Institute of Paris. His books were condemned by the Vatican, and in 1908 he was excommunicated.

[55] According to Loisy, "the possibility, the necessity and the legitimacy of evolution in understanding the dogmas of the Church, including that of papal infallibility and authority, as well as in the manner of exercising this authority is the fundamental principle of modernism." See: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10415a.htm.

[56] Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis,* 8 September 1907, n.p. [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decl_19651028_nostra-aetate_en.html, n.2. Earlier in 1907, Pope Pius had released an encyclical, *Lamentabili Sane*, which condemned (in 65 points) modernist or relativist propositions regarding the Church, sacraments, the deity of Christ, and other important Catholic positions. Many of these propositions in one form or another subjected Church authority to exegetical concerns or scriptural findings. The encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, went further, not only condemning relativist propositions adopted by the modernists, but the modernists themselves, stating that "partisans of error are to be sought not only among the Church's open enemies; but, what is to be most dreaded and deplored, in her very bosom, and are the more mischievous the less they keep in the open."

[57] One aspect of Catholic modernism was the attempt to adapt Catholicism to the intellectual, moral and social needs of contemporary culture. It was the desire of modernists to "live in harmony with the spirit of the age"(http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10415a.htm). Another way of describing the modernist movement was that it was a driving desire and the working towards a complete emancipation from all previous authoritative structures (political and religious) by means of the free use of science, unhindered from the fear of what it might discover and what its conclusions might suggest for previously held dogmas. Reconciliation among men with differing opinions was a dream of the modernists so much so that to have understanding and cooperation between those of "different Christianities," and even to bridge the gap between Christians and atheists was prioritized over upholding doctrinal differences.

its overt expressions and even in the subtle forms, which he claimed existed in hidden places in the heart of the Church.[58] Among their other transgressions, these "modernists" were employing biblical critical methods. In addition to questioning the divinity of Christ, they regarded scientific and historical scriptural exegesis as equal to, or perhaps even better than, traditional theological and pastoral exegesis.[59] Thus science, instead of being subject to faith, now seemed to take precedence over faith.[60]

As the perceived threat to the Church grew, an effort to eliminate all traces of modernism from the Catholic Church became critical. Modernism was identified as the synthesis of all previous heresies, and practices and persons associated with modernism would be suspect. As a result, the findings of historical biblical criticism were condemned as unfaithful to the teaching of the Church.[61] Thus, although scientific discovery, new to the early 1900s would bring evidence which challenged previously held views regarding authorship, dating, and origin of biblical books, the Catholic Church

[58] Ironically, those who were coined "modernists" by their more conservative opponents may not have been able to adequately define themselves. The Catholic Church, specifically Pope Pius X, defined "modernism" both for the purpose of spotlighting the new enemy of the faith, and for the purpose of self-defining the Catholic Church over against such heresy.

[59] Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis,* 8 September 1907, n.2. "Many who belong to the Catholic laity, and, what is much more sad, to the ranks of the priesthood itself, who, animated by a false zeal for the Church, lacking the solid safeguards of philosophy and theology, nay more, thoroughly imbued with the poisonous doctrines taught by the enemies of the Church, and lost to all sense of modesty, put themselves forward as reformers of the Church; and, forming more boldly into line of attack, assail all that is most sacred in the work of Christ, not sparing even the Person of the Divine Redeemer, whom, with sacrilegious audacity, they degrade to the condition of a simple and ordinary man."

[60] Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis,* 8 September 1907, n.18. The disregard for Church teaching and authority is compared to Luther, which suggests that the centuries old conflict (the Protestant Reformation) is still very much in the background of thought as this new threat is evaluated. In the end, what the "modernists" saw as new and innovative, an exploration and integration of modern science and philosophy with theology and faith, Pope Pius X saw as aberrant and detrimental to the faith. He states, "In the same way they draw their distinctions between exegesis which is theological and pastoral and exegesis which is scientific and historical. So, too, when they treat of philosophy, history, and criticism, acting on the principle that science in no way depends upon faith, they feel no especial horror in treading in the footsteps of Luther and are wont to display a manifold contempt for Catholic doctrines, for the Holy Fathers, for the Ecumenical Councils, for the ecclesiastical magisterium; and should they be taken to task for this, they complain that they are being deprived of their liberty. Lastly, maintaining the theory that faith must be subject to science, they continuously and openly rebuke the Church on the ground that she resolutely refuses to submit and accommodate her dogmas to the opinions of philosophy; while they, on their side, having for this purpose blotted out the old theology, endeavor to introduce a new theology which shall support the aberrations of philosophers."

[61] Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis,* 8 September 1907, n. 34.

would take an official stand against the new scientific methods and biblical criticism, even for the purposes of evaluating this new data. The modernists had employed these methods, and Vatican condemnations of modernism did not make distinction between the possible intrinsic value of biblical criticism and the theological use of it by these modernists.[62] For almost forty years (1900–1940), this conservative mood governed the official statements of the Catholic Church. However, in the 1940s the Catholic Church radically reversed this position.

In 1943, under the leadership of Pope Pius XII, the Catholic Church released the encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* which instructed Catholic scholars to use the methods of scientific approach to the Bible that had previously been closed to them.[63] A new era in Catholic biblical scholarship was dawning. Whereas before, those who employed biblical criticism were suspect because of the similar use by the modernists, now *Divino Afflante Spiritu* suggested in great detail that those who did not employ all the resources now available to them could in fact be guilty of sloth.[64] These new resources included both a study of the scriptures in their original language (as opposed to the Vulgate),[65] as well as biblical critical methods such as historical and literary criticism.[66] Pope Pius XII's enthusiasm for the new methods of study changed the face of Catholic biblical scholarship.

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[62] Terrance T. Prendergast, S.J. "The Church's Great Challenge: Proclaiming God's Word in the New Millennium," in *Life in Abundance* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 2.

[63] Prendergast, "The Church's Great Challenge: Proclaiming God's Word in the New Millennium," 2.

[64] Pope Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu,* 30 September 1943, n.p., [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_30091943_divino-afflante-spiritu_en.html, n.15.

[65] Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, 30 September 1943, n.15. Previously, Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* (1893) stated that Catholic scholars could utilize biblical texts in their original languages only for the purpose of clarifying the Latin of the Vulgate. *Divino Afflante Spiritu,* however, explained that the reason the scholars of the ages did not utilize the original languages before is because very few of them had an adequate knowledge of the languages, thus, the Vulgate was all that was truly available to them. Even the Scholastics of the middle ages only had access to the Vulgate because of a lack of skill regarding the biblical languages.

[66] Pius XII, *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, 30 September 1943, n.16: "Ought we to explain the original text which, having been written by the inspired author himself, has more authority and greater weight than any even the very best translation, whether ancient or modern; this can be done all the more easily and fruitfully, if to the knowledge of languages be joined a real skill in literary criticism of the same text."

In 1958, Pope Pius XII died, and the future of biblical criticism in the Catholic Church was once again in danger. Many of those in Catholic leadership were still opposed to the use of biblical critical methods by its scholars. While much debate occurred, in the end, the use of biblical critical methods would remain a part of the Catholic Church. *Dei Verbum* (1965) was the final document pertinent to Scripture to come out of Vatican II. It states:

> Since everything asserted by the inspired authors or sacred writers must be held to be asserted by the Holy Spirit, it follows that the books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching solidly, faithfully and without error *that truth which God wanted put into sacred writings.*[67]

This statement subtly gave space for Scripture to be sacred and inspired, without it necessarily being historically accurate.[68] Not only was the biblical critical movement in the Catholic Church now safe both from internal church persecution and the danger of returning to a time when use of modern critical methods by its scholars was forbidden, but in 1972 Pope Paul VI restructured the Pontifical Biblical Commission[69] so that biblical scholars were no longer simply consultants but, in fact, constituted the commission.[70] In a period of approximately thirty years, Catholic scholars who employed biblical critical methods went from being persecuted by those in the higher levels of the Church, to being legitimately appointed and consulted as members in authority in the Church. It is during this period that Raymond Brown entered the field of biblical studies. Free to use biblical criticism and free from the conservative mood that dominated the Church prior to *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, Brown's scholarship grew in this era of academic freedom. He was not part of the generation branded by the Church as heretics for their employment of forbidden methods. In fact, his training began after the battle over critical

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[67] Paul IV, *Dei Verbum,,* 18 September 1965, n.p., [cited 8 May 2009], Online: http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19651118_dei-verbum_en.html, n.11. Emphasis mine.

[68] "That truth that God wanted to put into the sacred writings" is not the same as asserting that the events described in the Bible happened historically.

[69] Raymond Brown would serve on the Pontifical Biblical Commission twice during his academic career.

[70] Prendergast, "The Church's Great Challenge: Proclaiming God's Word in the New Millennium," 3.

scholarship in the Catholic Church had essentially been won. As a result, Brown can be considered part of the first generation of Catholic biblical scholars to have fully benefited from *Divino Afflante Spiritu.* He was loyal to the Church, as he never knew a time when the Church considered him an enemy. However, he was not unaware of the bitterness and hurt understandably carried by his biblical critical predecessors. Nor was he so naïve to think that the conservative contingent in the Church that was opposed to biblical critical methods simply went away. Raymond Brown was a modern man and fully convinced that the use of biblical critical methods was necessary for the Church. This freedom to question the doctrines and biblical interpretation of the past, combined with the revisiting of Catholic attitudes towards the Jews, governed Raymond Brown's own approach to biblical studies.

Raymond Brown's Approach to Biblical Interpretation

In an essay written in 1961 entitled "Our New Approach to the Bible," Brown explains the newness of the Catholic biblical movement of the 1950s. While others have suspected any "new" movement after having the biblical text for nearly 2000 years, Brown states that "the very fact that there is a new biblical movement is a witness to the eternal vitality of the Church and to God's providential plan for its growth."[71] He goes on to explain why this movement came about at this time.

> The modern Catholic biblical movement is the result of a grafting of the past one hundred years of scientific discovery on the tree of Christian knowledge. In the past other grafts have been made on this tree of Christian knowledge and each time, with proper pruning, the tree has born ever richer fruit. In the early centuries Greco-Roman culture with its laws, ethics, organization, and philosophical imagery was grafted on to the basic teachings of the Galilean Rabbi; and the result was the flowering of the patristic period…So now in the past hundred years there has been a growth in scientific knowledge unparalleled in the history of mankind; and this knowledge too has its role to play in the growth of Christianity.[72]

[71] Raymond Brown, *New Testament Essays,* (USA: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1965), 22.

[72] Brown, *New Testament Essays,* 22.

Brown continues by delineating the areas where new information has been found that has specifically affected biblical interpretation. The 19th century deciphering of hieroglyphics and Persian cuneiform meant that by the end of that century, Egyptian, Babylonian, and Assyrian records could be read accurately, adding more witnesses to the past.[73] In addition, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and archaeological finds have shed light on the Bible in ways that were previously unavailable. As a result, the new biblical movement was not simply the result of a new attitude, but new available information.

Brown wholeheartedly affirms this new approach to biblical studies. In the preface to *New Testament Essays* he explains:

> The opening essay makes it clear from the very first page of the volume that [the] author is committed, heart, mind, and soul to the modern biblical movement that for Catholics had its origins in Pope Pius XII's great encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943). This scientific approach to the Bible is the only approach that can make sense to the men of our time… the modern biblical movement is solidly grounded in science, has received the approving patronage of the Church, and is a thoughtful and necessary Christian response to contemporary culture.[74]

Brown shows himself to be "faithfully Catholic" as he defends the previous conservative mood that governed the Church before *Divino Afflante Spiritu.* He states:

> Between the Modernist crisis at the beginning of this century and 1943 [*Divino Afflante Spiritu*] there was a period in which the authorities of the Catholic Church, made cautious by the Modernist extravagances, frowned on the free application of scientific historical criticism to the Bible.[75]

Brown goes on to make assurances that while modernists may have made use of biblical critical methods, the Catholic scholars who use those methods in the present do not hold the positions that the modernists did. Brown states:

> The fact that a modern Catholic biblical scholar will occasionally accept some fact that the Modernists accepted fifty years ago proves nothing regarding his heterodoxy. The important question is how does he interpret his facts. And you

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[73] Brown, *New Testament Essays,* 24.

[74] Brown, *New Testament Essays*, 10.

[75] Brown, *New Testament Essays,* 10.

> can be sure that the erroneous and heretical presuppositions that were the backbone of Modernism are held by no modern Catholic biblical scholar.[76]

While a strong proponent of the use of biblical critical methods, Brown roots his methods and findings within what is acceptable for the Catholic Church. In a post-script to the essay, "Our New Approach to the Bible," Brown speaks about the struggle for critical methods in the Catholic Church. He states:

> This paper was delivered in 1961 when the modern biblical movement was facing considerable opposition and, indeed, was fighting for its life. It is a great joy that now a few years later the clouds have lifted and the hopes of the writer [Brown] for tolerance and acceptance have been granted beyond expectation. Vatican II has adamantly refused to approve any statement on Revelation which would set the biblical movement back… As far as the writer knows, no Protestant community possesses an official statement on biblical criticism so progressive in tone as the one now given Catholic scholars by Rome.[77]

It is clear that Brown had much at stake in the Catholic Church's stand on the use of biblical critical methods. Brown himself presented this essay on the validity of the movement, as a defense when the movement was "fighting for its life." This symbiotic relationship between the biblical scholar and his tradition is something we will explore in chapters two through five in regard to Brown's perspective on "the Jews" in John.

Johannine Scholarship Influencing Raymond Brown

Raymond Brown's first major[78] work on the Gospel of John was his Anchor Bible Commentary written in 1966.[79] Hovering in the background among the many sources he draws upon are two scholars to whom Brown consistently refers: Rudolf Bultmann and C. H. Dodd. As Brown stood on the shoulders of these scholars, their impact upon Johannine studies is critical to evaluating Brown's own work. After commenting briefly

[76] Brown, *New Testament Essays,* 10.

[77] Brown, *New Testament Essays,* 10.

[78] Brown wrote a smaller commentary that we will discuss later as well as many articles on the Gospel of John, but this was the first major work he wrote on John.

[79] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII.*

on their contribution to Johannine Studies, we will examine how they treated the question of "the Jews" in the Gospel of John.

Rudolf Bultmann

Rudolf Bultmann was one of most influential figures in twentieth-century New Testament studies. While pioneering both form criticism and a theological system of demythologization, Bultmann's name has lived on as a historical marker in the discipline of New Testament studies. One thing that distinguishes Bultmann from other New Testament scholars is that he was as much a theologian as he was a biblical scholar. His influence is such that the scholars who have come after him have either agreed or disagreed with his assessments, but nobody with serious intentions, including Raymond Brown, has been able to ignore him.

Rudolf Karl Bultmann was born on August 20, 1884, in Wiefelstede, a predominantly Protestant village about fifteen miles from the city of Oldenburg in northwest Germany, which was saturated at this time with ideas of the theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher.[80] He was raised in the home of his father, an Evangelical Lutheran pastor, and spent most of his youth in the agrarian countryside. These influences from his youth would remain with Bultmann his whole life.[81]

There are some key elements that make Bultmann's thought distinctive. First, Bultmann utilized the concept of myth as his key to interpreting the New Testament.[82] Secondly, in the tradition of the History of Religions school,[83] Bultmann saw the New

[80] William D. Dennison, *The Young Bultmann* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2008), 7.

[81] According to Dennison's *The Young Bultmann,* Bultmann would be caught between the academic world and the world of the common man most of his life. Those in academia were often times elitist and cared nothing for the common man, while the common man resisted the findings that academia unearthed, thus choosing to remain ignorant.

[82] Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, and Roland E. Murphy, eds., *New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999), 1138.

[83] A nineteenth-century German school of thought which was the first to systematically study religion as a socio-cultural phenomenon. It depicted religion as evolving with human culture, from primitive polytheism to ethical monotheism. This school could be seen as beginning with William Wrede and the idea that doctrine should not inform history, but history of the New Testament should be unbiased as much as possible, and not import historical dogma into the early New Testament documents. The task should be to find out the religion of early Christianity.

Testament as being influenced by Gnosticism and early Christianity as syncretistic.[84] However, beyond these aspects that contribute to Bultmann's overall thought are two dominant influences which permeate everything he does: Martin Heidegger's existentialism[85] and Lutheranism.

Heidegger's influence can be seen in Bultmann's theological use of existentialism.[86] Both defined man's emergence from self-deception and freedom from bondage (to the false security of this dying world), as the transition from inauthentic existence to authentic existence. For Heidegger, this is accomplished by personal decision. For Bultmann, personal decision, or an act of will, is necessary to open oneself to the forgiving grace present in the *kerygma* (the active, preached word of God). But ultimately, this *kerygma*—and thus the power for the transition—is a gift from God.[87] Thus, Bultmann uniquely synthesized Lutheranism with existentialism.

For Bultmann, in order for the modern individual to have any sort of theological claim to the biblical text, there must be a valid reality to it, making it relevant for today. However, regardless of its divine origin or sacred message, in its present state, the biblical text cannot possibly have meaning for the modern individual because of its mythological "packaging." The mythological aspects must be stripped away, and the core message of Jesus re-communicated for a modern understanding. As a result, Bultmann began the process of "demythologizing" the biblical text, making it understandable and relevant to the modern individual, while at the same time, analyzing what portion of the text is truly historical in order to strip away that which is not historical.

While Bultmann's platform and methodology may be historical-critical, his project was very theological. His intent was to communicate a Gospel that people of his day could accept, a Gospel that he might be able to accept in a world where church

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[84] An example of this would be the similarity between Graeco-Roman mystery cults and early Christianity in terms of ritual and myth.

[85] One uniqueness of Bultmann was his reliance and integration of Martin Heidegger's existential philosophy: Hasel, *New Testament Theology,* 56; J. Macquarrie, *An Existentialist Theology: Comparison of Heidegger and Bultmann*, London: SCM, 1955.

[86] Bultmann and Heidegger were colleagues at Marburg in the 1920s.

[87] Brown, Fitzmeyer, and Murphy, *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 1138.

authority and ecclesiastical tradition no longer governed the intellect of man. The existential influence can be seen in Bultmann's desire to give to the world a believable option by which the modern individual could continue to think while living out a Gospel that had relevance in the present. Bultmann sensed the need for the Gospel message to be communicated in such a way that mankind could respond to God in the "now."[88]

Rudolf Bultmann put great emphasis on the spoken word of Jesus. In fact, even in his project of demythologization, Bultmann went to great lengths to determine what the historical words and deeds of Jesus were.[89] The Lutheran element can be seen in this strong evangelical emphasis on the preached word.[90] In addition, Bultmann understood his own theological enterprise as well within the Reformation tradition of "justification by faith," so much so that to seek for the historical and objective proof of the Gospels was unfruitful and counterproductive to faith.[91] Form Criticism, another method for which Bultmann is known, fit well with this overall theological agenda. As Bultmann was able to uncover earlier strata in the *kerygma* of Christ preserved in the Gospels, he was able to pare away the non-historical, non-essential mythology and preserve only what was salvific to the modern man. In this way, Brown and Bultmann could be seen as undertaking similar endeavors. Both were motivated by their faith traditions, both saw their use of biblical critical methods as a vocation in service to the Church, and both had a pastoral desire to communicate the Gospel in such a way as to make it relevant to the modern individual. In addition, both were flexible regarding the impact that the historicity of the Gospels, as determined by biblical critical methods, has on the life of Christian faith. For Bultmann, this is because what matters is the revelation of Christ of himself through his spoken words, rather than any of the non-essential life history of Jesus created by the early Church. For Brown, this is because the Catholic Church through *Divino Afflante Spiritu* and *Dei Verbum* was no longer forced to interpret the Bible as literal history, but as the inspired Word that God intended for the Church to

[88] Hasel, *New Testament Theology,* 56.

[89] Brown, Fitzmeyer, and Murphy, *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 1139.

[90] Brown, Fitzmeyer, and Murphy, *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 1138.

[91] Brown, Fitzmeyer, and Murphy, *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 1138.

have. Thus for both, faith is not determined by a literal history of the biblical text, but by a belief in God to communicate salvation to man through it.

Methodologically, one of Bultmann's great contributions to Johannine studies was his application of source criticism to the Gospel of John. His monumental 1941 commentary broke down the Gospel into two levels of composition. The first stage was the writing/compiling of the Evangelist himself, while the second stage was that of the ecclesiastical redactor.[92] The Evangelist drew upon three sources: a signs-source,[93] a revelatory discourses source,[94] and a passion-resurrection source.[95] Regarding the Gospel's role in the development of early Christianity, Bultmann asserted that the Gospel was not dependent on Paul or other strains of New Testament writing,[96] nor is it a simple extension of Judaism. Bultmann came to the conclusion that the author of the Gospel took over a non-Christian source,[97] one steeped in Gnostic mythology, and adapted it to his own purposes.[98] His answer to what the main theme of the Gospel is can be stated in one word: revelation or, put in other terms, Jesus' revelation of himself as revealer.[99] Bultmann's exegetical methods and his theological, existential thought are combined when he sees revelation, the main theme of the Gospel, as being conceived only when one rejects any attempt to find the answers to human questions. As a result, the historical is irrelevant, and the findings of historical criticism not contrary to faith. Only when one

[92] This individual, according to Bultmann, took the Gospel and made it more palatable to an early Church audience and minimized some of the Gnostic elements. This is one area where Bultmann and Brown disagree. Bultmann sees the Evangelist and the redactor in tension, while Brown sees the two in harmony with similar goals and ideologies.

[93] This was a collection of miracles. These were not historical but symbolic.

[94] This was a collection of poetic discourses that Bultmann believed had Gnostic origins, like the Evangelist.

[95] This was an account similar to the passion-resurrection narrative described in the Synoptics, but different enough to surmise that there was no actual dependence on the Synoptic tradition.

[96] Note that independence from does not mean dissimilar in thought.

[97] Bultmann relied heavily on Mandean texts to make the comparisons with John's Gospel. Many have since rejected this.

[98] Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel,* 58.

[99] Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel,* 53.

rejects all attempts to absorb God's revelation into human understanding can faith work for Bultmann.

According to Bultmann, in the Gospel of John, "The Jews" are representatives of unbelief, and thereby will appear to be the unbelieving world in general.[100] Bultmann states:

> The polemical situation manifests a considerable change from that presupposed in the Synoptic Gospels. Admittedly in John, as in them, the Jews are in continual opposition to Jesus. But they no longer appear in the distinctions of Palestinian relations. Jews represent the unbelieving world, and mirror the relations of all unbelievers to the Christian Church and its message.[101]

What do they not believe? They do not believe that Jesus is the revealer. In fact, during the passion narrative, "the Jews" will participate in the revelation-event, because their own unbelief will cause them to "destroy the temple" which is Jesus, bringing judgment upon themselves.[102] One example of Bultmann's theological interpretation can be seen in John 2:14, where Jesus cleanses the temple. He states, "This action of Jesus represents and portrays the struggle between revelation and the world."[103] He continues only a few sentences later by saying, "In Jesus God is present… the world however has to face the attack of the revelation, and it demonstrates its unbelief by autocratically demanding from the Revealer a proof of his authority."[104] Along this same theme, Bultmann uses the bread of life discourse in John 6 to point out that when "the Jews" murmur in verse 41, it is because revelation has encountered them in history, in their realm, and thus they are offended.[105] Again, in verse 45, Bultmann states, "The Jews do not have it in their power to form a judgment about the Revealer… their thinking is itself unbelief because it takes

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[100] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John,* 86.

[101] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John,* 3–4.

[102] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John,* 128.

[103] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John,* 128.

[104] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John,* 129.

[105] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John*, 229.

place within the security of human judgment."[106] However, according to Bultmann, it is only God who lead one to belief and alter his/her situation. At this moment, one should recall his fundamental difference from Heidegger. Where Heidegger believed humanity could come to authentic existence through its own abilities, Bultmann believed the ability to move from inauthentic existence to authentic existence a gift from God.[107]

In the end, none of the narrative in the Gospel is as important for Bultmann as the concepts embedded in it regarding faith and belief, and the acceptance of revelation and rejection of it. Much communicated in the Gospel story is mythology, and the Jews only *represent* anyone who does not accept the revelation of Jesus as revealer. Thus, the Gospel for him would not be anti-Jewish; in fact for Bultmann, to think in such terms would prove misunderstanding on the part of the reader. Instead the Gospel is opposed to anything that would try to capture God and his revelation and understand it on any terms outside of his own.

Bultmann's impact on Johannine studies has been so influential that some have evaluated the history of Johannine studies in terms of "before Bultmann" and "after Bultmann."[108] Throughout Brown's 1966 commentary, in nearly every section of the detailed introductory section, Bultmann is a staple supplemented by other scholars with relevant research in each particular area. The only other scholar to receive as much attention from Brown as Rudolf Bultmann is C. H. Dodd.

C. H. Dodd

Charles Harold Dodd, the oldest of four boys, was born in Wrexham, North Wales, in 1884 to Sarah Parsonage (1854) and Charles Dodd.[109] Two brothers followed

[106] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John,* 231.

[107] Brown, Fitzmeyer, and Murphy, *New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 1138.

[108] Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*.

[109] F. W. Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd: Interpreter of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977),13.

Charles Harold to Oxford and the third went to the University of Wales,[110] with A. H. Dodd (the youngest brother) becoming a prominent professor of history.[111]

In regard to faith, the Congregational Church imparted some distinct principles to Dodd. It stressed the authority of scriptures as opposed to creeds and confessions, and while "election" was never officially verbalized, the congregants of the church did in fact feel elect in life and action.[112] When C. H. Dodd left home to go to Oxford for university studies (where he earned his undergraduate degree studying philosophy and history), his life would be a unique mixture of the academic religious environment at Oxford and the lay community of Wrexham which was saturated with worship, prayer meetings, and Bible study circles.[113] These two very different worlds would influence Dodd throughout his career.[114]

After completing his undergraduate degree at Oxford, Dodd spent a year in Germany where he came under the influence of Adolf Von Harnack. He later served three years as a Congregationalist Pastor in Warwick; it was his only ministry experience. From 1915, he was Yates Lecturer in New Testament at Oxford. He went on to become the Rylands Professor at the University of Manchester in 1930 and then Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge from 1935, becoming emeritus in 1949. He wrote many books and articles[115] and is considered one of the preeminent New Testament

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[110] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 42.

[111] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 15.

[112] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 34–35: "The Bible, it was assumed would lead a diligent reader into true belief, without any need for these "man made" guides. It was read daily and systematically at family prayers. We were expected to study it privately and to commit passages to memory. Its truth and verbal inspiration were taken for granted in theory at least; in practice, like all sensible persons, we took liberty to make reservations. I know that at a very early age I found some of the stories hard to swallow; but I made no great difficulty about them."

[113] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 50 –51.

[114] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 80. An unexpected event in Dodd's life, which ended up having a unique effect upon his biblical interpretation, was the breaking of his first marriage engagement. Because of the emotional trauma of this event, he began to visit Dr. J. A. Hadfield, one of the earliest practitioners in England of the new methods of psychoanalysis. His relationship with Dr. Hadfield over time gave Dodd new insight into psychology, which he appropriated into his own biblical interpretation. One example of this is *Mind of Paul: A Psychological Approach.*

[115] See appendix for Dodd bibliography.

scholars of the twentieth-century, known for his expression of "realized eschatology" and his interest in evaluating the New Testament in its wider historical Greco-Roman context.

While Dodd never wrote a commentary on John, his impact on Raymond Brown came through his two works: *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*[116] and *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel.*[117] Having already written extensively on other areas of the New Testament, Dodd began to place great importance upon the Fourth Gospel for understanding the New Testament as a whole.[118] *Interpretation* evaluated the Gospel of John against contemporary Greco-Roman and Jewish works and determined that the language of Rabbinic Judaism, Philo, and *Hermetica* had the closest resemblance to Johannine Christianity.[119] A notable aspect of Dodd's evaluation is that, contrary to Bultmann, and even without the Dead Sea Scrolls, he found the Gospel of John to be closer to Jewish documents than Hellenistic documents.[120] In Rudolf Bultmann's review of this book, he complimented Dodd, saying that the one thing that made this work so unique is that his examination of the Fourth Gospel was not a means to another end (for example, studying the Gospel to glean information on the historical Jesus).[121] Instead, Dodd was interested in evaluating the Gospel on its own terms, discovering what it had to say and why. *Interpretation* was an examination of the cultural background, theological

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[116] C. H. Dodd, *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1953).

[117] C. H. Dodd, *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: University Press, 1963).

[118] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 140.

[119] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 161. *Interpretation* did not include the Dead Sea Scrolls in its evaluation because not enough information was available on them. It is likely that if the book had been delayed even just a few years, Dodd would have decided differently. However, it is interesting to note that in his review of this book, Bultmann agreed with Dodd that at the time, there was not enough information on the Qumran texts to have incorporated them into this work.

[120] To some degree the issue is semantics. Dodd saw the Jewish influences to John as being quite Hellenistic. In other words, there was no reason to suggest that John gained its Hellenistic elements from a non-Jewish source as the Jewish sources were sufficiently Hellenized. Brown agrees with Dodd on this account and with the Dead Seas Scrolls available to Brown, this opinion was only strengthened. Bultmann however stated plainly in his review of this book his disappointment that Dodd spent so much time here, and overemphasized OT influence, yet did not spend enough time looking at the more Gnostic Hellenistic sources.

[121] Rudolf Karl Bultmann, "Rudolf Bultmann's review of C H Dodd's The interpretation of the Fourth Gospel," *Harvard Divinity Bulletin* 27 (January 1963): 9-22.

ideas, and literary structure of John, directed to the task of interpretation and determining the theological significance of the Gospel of John in early Christianity.[122]

Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel in some ways can be considered a continuation of the work begun in *Interpretation*. The focus in this book however was not the Jewish and Hellenistic influences on the Fourth Gospel, but the Jesus tradition behind it. Dodd was convinced that it was possible to discern behind the Fourth Gospel a strain of tradition that had not been used by the synoptic writers and yet could be regarded as originating in the Palestinian milieu at an early date, with a high claim to historicity.[123]

While Dodd utilized form criticism and recognized its importance, in his opinion, the use of this method had led Bultmann to radical conclusions. For Bultmann, based on the information provided in the Gospels, little to nothing could confidently be said of the career and personality of Jesus.[124] Only what was recorded of Jesus' teaching was arguably historical, and even that had to be purged of the added Hellenistic Christian elements. None of this however was of spiritual concern for Bultmann who advocated a faith not dependent on the historical findings of the life and teachings of Jesus. Dodd, in contrast, advocated an overall view of history.[125] For Dodd, Christianity grounds itself upon revelation *in history*, therefore, what really happened in history is of great importance.[126] This goes along with Dodd's own expression of "realized eschatology," one of the concepts for which he is known.[127] Rather than choosing between eschatology as something that comes at the end of time possibly in another realm, and eschatology

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[122] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 161. See also: Bultmann, "Review of C. H. Dodd's The interpretation of the Fourth Gospel," 9-22.

[123] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 165–166; Norman Perrin, "Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of Religion* 44, no. 4 (October 1964), 335. In his review of Dodd's work, Norman Perrin said that Dodd argued this convincingly. His only criticism was that just because this tradition was early and independent of the Synoptics, that did not make it historical. See also: Birger Pearson, "Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel," *Vigiliae Christianae*, 21, no. 2 (May, 1967), 128-130.

[124] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 223.

[125] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 223.

[126] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 139. Recall, this is the opposite of Bultmann's position. For Bultmann, the necessity of grounding the Christian narrative in history is actually a lack of faith.

[127] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 118. This is most often associated with his book *Parable of the Kingdom.*

that manifests itself in the immediate historical present, Dodd integrates both. While God's rule must ultimately (in some later time) be established in the whole universe, that rule has already been realized in the present era that we call history, through the personal career of Jesus of Nazareth.[128]

Between *Interpretation* and *Historical Tradition*, there are two major points that penetrate his overall understanding of the Gospel, which can be seen in Raymond Brown's perspectives as well. The first is seeing the Gospel of John as closer to the Judaism of the day rather than being influenced by a non-Jewish Hellenism. The second is rooting events of the Fourth Gospel in history and valuing the Fourth Gospel as giving us historical evidence for the life about Jesus and his teachings. C. H. Dodd is unrelenting in these points and has influenced Raymond Brown who holds nearly identical opinions.

Dodd does not engage in much discussion about "the Jews" in John. His greatest independent attention to "the Jews" is buried in a footnote halfway through *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel.*[129] In this footnote, Dodd acknowledges the different uses of "the Jews" in the Gospel of John.[130] They can be the general body of Jewish people so far as they are hostile or unfriendly to Christ, the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem,[131] or Judeans (rather than Jews). However, Dodd does stress that whatever meaning fits best for "the Jews" in a given passage, the overarching meaning attached to the word is that they are the enemies of Christ.[132]

In Dodd's discussion of the Passion scene (John 21:11) where Jesus speaks the words to Pilate, "The one handing me over to you has the greater sin,"[133] Dodd explains

[128] Dillistone, *C. H. Dodd,* 118.

[129] Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel*, 242, fn.2.

[130] First line of the footnote states "this writer uses the term "οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι" imprecisely.

[131] He stresses this meaning again on page 264. Dodd says that when John uses the term "the Jews" he often times means "Jewish authorities."

[132] Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel,* 107.

[133] Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel,* 107.

how the Jewish authorities[134] bear most ("though not the whole")[135] of the responsibility of the crucifixion here. In Dodd's estimation, "the one giving over"[136] must be Caiaphas as opposed to Judas.[137] Even with his interpretation that the blame of the crucifixion has been placed on "the Jews," Dodd does not believe that John's passion account is motivated by a desire to implicate the Jews.[138] At the same time he argues, "The statement which is often made, that the Johannine account is influenced by the motive of incriminating the Jews cannot be substantiated, when it is compared to the other Gospels."[139] Dodd comes to this conclusion by comparing the passage in John to the blood libel in Matthew 27:25.[140] While Matthew has placed the responsibility of Jesus' death on the people (λαός), John has placed the responsibility on the Jewish authorities, thus in Dodd's perspective, lessening the anti-Jewish impact by comparison. In the course of 454 pages in *Historical Tradition*, this is the extent of his discussion of the Gospel of John's polemical use of "the Jews." In general, his discussion of "the Jews" is not a focal point or issue in itself, but one of the points he addresses when examining other issues.

Similarly in *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*,[141] Dodd does not discuss "the Jews" in terms of Johannine polemic. Even when discussing the volatile passage in John 8:44 where Jesus tells "the Jews" that their father is the devil, Dodd does not discuss this passage in terms of anti-Judaism, but true to the overall thesis of this particular book, he

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[134] He makes a clear distinction here between the Jewish authorities and the people. It is the authorities who bear the blame in this instance, not the people as a whole. Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel,* 107.

[135] Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel,* 107.

[136] Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel,* 107: παράδοσις;

[137] Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel* 106–107. Dodd acknowledges that there is dispute over whether "the one handing over" is Judas or Caiaphas. He explains that it must be Caiaphas because while Judas placed Jesus in the power of the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas placed Jesus in the hands of Pilate.

[138] As Dodd does not think John is dependent on the Synoptic Gospels, it cannot be that he supposes any anti-Judaism is imported from the other Gospels. Instead, he seems to be suggesting that this aspect of the Passion account is simply historical and not motivated by any form of polemical slander.

[139] Dodd, *Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel,* 107.

[140] "His blood be upon us and our children."

[141] Note that this is the earlier of the two works.

discusses it to illustrate how the author of John unconsciously integrated the two cultures, Hellenism and Judaism.[142] In 1963, this issue was not yet a major concern and therefore did not require the kind of attention that later decades would demand.

Raymond Brown on General Johannine Issues

In the early pages of Brown's 1966 Anchor Bible Commentary on John, he credits a seminar taught by William Foxwell Albright at Johns Hopkins University for setting him on the path of Johannine studies.[143] While Albright's seminar may be responsible for Brown's initial research on the Fourth Gospel, it is predominantly Dodd and Bultmann who influenced Brown on Johannine issues.[144] In most of these issues, Brown sides with Dodd over Bultmann, choosing to accept the Gospel in the form we have it, rather than proposing changes to rectify "problems" with its final written form or suggesting that its final redactor acted as a censor rather than "finisher." As a result, it appears Bultmann was not a big influence in Brown's thinking. Yet, it is his name that comes up repeatedly as the "differing" opinion. While Brown may not agree with many of Bultmann's propositions, he has picked Bultmann as one of the two opinions by which he will define his own.

The issue of accidental displacements in the Fourth Gospel is one of the first discussed in Brown's introduction, and here the disagreement between Bultmann and Dodd begins. Bultmann spends quite a bit of time evaluating and explaining the different

[142] Dodd, *Interpretation*, 158–159: He states, "It is the assumption of Judaism that God is the Father of His people Israel, and they His sons; they are supposed to know Him. The Hellenistic line is prominent. Those who do not know God do not know ἀλήθεια and consequently are not free men but slaves. In Greek thought, such knowledge brings freedom. Jews of the first century show that they do not know God by persecuting His people, like the Jews in the time of Jeremiah. Their father is the devil."

[143] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* VII.

[144] I am using Brown's first major work, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, to make this assessment. Brown's opinions on many issues will change over time, and to some degree, this project will display those changes, especially as they pertain to his changing perspective of "the Jews." However, as his first major work, I think it is important to establish a baseline of where his opinions lean as it is in this work that he establishes himself as a major Johannine scholar. Brown has relied on Dodd and Bultmann as the two major scholarly opinions that he consults (thus the earlier section on Bultmann and Dodd). As they often times have differing opinions, Brown generally must side with one over the other.

places in the Gospel where he thinks passages have been accidentally misplaced. He does this because there are discrepancies in the Gospel where passages that are currently juxtaposed do not actually seem to flow together. Dodd, however, does not see a problem with the current order and, therefore, has no need to explain displacements. Brown, while sympathetic to Bultmann,[145] agrees here with Dodd.[146] After discussing the various strengths and weaknesses to displacement theories he states, "In summary, the theory of accidental displacement seems to create almost as many problems as it solves. The solution to our problem would appear to lie in the direction of a more deliberate procedure."[147]

In discussing source theories, Brown again sides with Dodd over Bultmann. He disagrees with the amount of Gnostic influence that Bultmann attributes to his sources (and thus to the overall Gospel). While Bultmann has localized his three sources as independent traditions, Dodd on the other hand believes that the discourses interpret the signs while Bultmann sees the two as separate sources. Brown agrees with Dodd.

When discussing the issue of multiple editions of the Gospel, Brown notes that any theory that suggests a major editing of the Gospel is in reality suggesting the reworking of sources, something that he does not want to do. Brown sets the parameters for his commentary by saying that he will comment on the Gospel in its present order without imposing rearrangements and assuming that the final editor was loyal to the Evangelist's thoughts (like Dodd, contrary to Bultmann). He does posit a five-stage development of the Gospel that begins with material similar to the Synoptics and ends with a final redaction decades after the life of Jesus with material imported from the later time.[148] However, he stresses that there was no stage in the formation of the Gospel

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[145] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, XXVI-XXVII: Bultmann has unfairly been accused of commenting on the Gospel according to Bultmann rather than the Gospel according to John.

[146] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* XXVI-XXVII. Brown also references Wikenhauser and Bernard as others who suggest accidental displacements and Hoskyns and Barrett as those who agree with Dodd.

[147] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* XXVIII.

[148] See: Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* XXXIV-XXXIII for a detailed description of this theory. This is one of the places where Brown will spend extensive time in later research. His book *Community of the Beloved Disciple* is an exploration of the community that formed the Gospel of John and

where the compiler/redactor was not in agreement with the words and thoughts of the original material. Where Bultmann suggests that the final redactor tried to harmonize the work of the Evangelist with standard Church teaching (e.g., by adding sacramental references), Brown argues that the redactor did not change the original nature of the Gospel, but instead made the existing sacramentalism more explicit.

One of the earliest theories regarding John's dependence on the Synoptics is that John was written as the more "spiritual" Gospel, to supplement the Synoptics.[149] This theory by its nature suggests that the author of John was fully aware of the content of the Synoptics when he (or she) wrote. While the theory of John as a supplement has been abandoned by most, Synoptic dependence is still an issue of debate. Brown however, sides with Dodd stating that evidence does not support Johannine dependence on the Synoptics. Instead, John drew on a primitive, independent source, which preserves some reliable historical traditions, to formulate this Gospel.[150] In fact, Brown goes as far as to suggest that contrary to practice of many of the "Post-Bultmannians," who in their search for the historical Jesus dismiss the Gospel of John as having historical merit, this Gospel needs to be revisited as it may contain historical information regarding the life and times of Jesus.[151]

What are the major influences on the religious thought of the Fourth Gospel? Bultmann would say Gnosticism. Dodd would say Hellenistic Judaism including Philo, Rabbinic Judaism, and the *Hermetica*. While not inherently opposed to either, Brown disagrees with them both. In regard to Bultmann's theories on Gnostic influence, Brown does not disapprove, but thinks it "tenuous and unnecessary in light of other Jewish sources."[152] In regard to Dodd's theories, Brown agrees with Braun who states that had

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the stages that went into the creation of this Gospel. We will discuss this more in Chapter 3 when there is a specific discussion of *Community*.

[149] Clement and Eusebius: Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 6.14.7.

[150] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* XLVII.

[151] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* XLVIII.

[152] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LV.

Philo never existed, John would probably look the same.[153] He is convinced that *Hermetica* is helpful for interpreting John, but thinks that both *Hermetica* and John more likely derived similar ideas, language, and terminology from the Greek Old Testament. Brown thinks that the influence attributed to Hellenism,[154] Rabbinic Judaism, and even Qumran[155] reflects the "influence of combination of various ways of thinking, current in Palestine during the time of Jesus and after his death."[156]

Brown, like Dodd, roots the Gospel in history. Unlike Bultmann, who sees most of the Gospel as an existential message of salvation that may be historic but not historical,[157] both Dodd and Bultmann regard the Gospel of John as providing reliable information about the life of Jesus. Similarly, regarding the role of the beloved disciple, Bultmann[158] suggests that the beloved disciple is symbolic, representing the Hellenistic branch of Christianity.[159] Brown does not discount Bultmann's observations, or the potential for symbolic meaning in the characters of the Gospel, but he is not willing to reduce them to pure symbols removed from the historical story of the Gospel.[160] In the end, Brown leans heavily on the historical authenticity of the text by attributing the historic tradition of the Fourth Gospel to John, son of Zebedee, because of both external and internal evidence associating the Gospel with John, son of Zebedee and because of the Gospel's claim of an eyewitness source. While eventually handed down to a disciple

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[153] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LVIII.

[154] With Hellenism, it is not that there was not Hellenistic influence on the Gospel, but more that there is no reason to suppose that it was outside or separate from the Jewish influence. Brown suggests that the Judaism which influenced the Gospel was sufficiently steeped in Hellenism so that any Hellenistic influence would have come through via the Jewish influence.

[155] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXII. It is important to note that the Qumran documents were not available to Bultmann or Dodd when they wrote their works on John. Brown's Anchor Bible Commentary was one of the first to incorporate the Qumran documents. While Brown sees parallels, he does not think the parallels are close enough to suggest literary dependence.

[156] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXIII.

[157] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXXIX.

[158] Brown also refers to Loisy here who interprets the beloved disciple symbolically as the perfect Christian disciple.

[159] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXXIX.

[160] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* XCIV.

of John, Brown once again asserts that this disciple's own views would have mirrored his master's and, thus, the Gospel as we have it is consistent with the original historical tradition of John, son of Zebedee, and not a Gnostic work (Bultmann) edited by an ecclesiastical redactor.[161] In the end, while Brown appreciates Bultmann's opinions, and holds him up as one of the major scholars with whom he contends, Brown sides with Dodd against Bultmann on every major Johannine issue.

Influences on Raymond Brown regarding "The Jews"

As we discussed in the previous section, Brown, like Dodd, was hesitant to attribute to the Gospel of John symbolic interpretation that did not have a historical counterpart. In reference to Bultmann, Brown says:

> Bultmann has not done Johannine studies a disservice in pointing out some of the existential qualities of the Fourth Gospel. Much more than Bultmann however, we believe that the evangelist rooted this existential goal in a picture of Jesus …that had historical value.[162]

It should not be surprising then that Bultmann's interpretation of "the Jews" in John as the symbol of inauthentic existence does not satisfy Brown's approach which attempts to understand "the Jews" as a historical entity.

While Dodd did not spend much time on this issue, his brief discussion of "the Jews" as primarily hostile and his footnote that classified different uses of "the Jews," did influence Raymond Brown. His 1966 Anchor Bible Commentary was similar to what C. H. Dodd displayed in *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel*.[163]

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[161] For more information on Brown's opinion regarding other specific issues in John such as dating, language, place, eschatology, etc. see the introduction of *The Gospel According to John I–XII.*

[162] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXXIX.

[163] It is important to note that Brown's first publication on John, *The Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles* (1960), did not address the complexities that his Anchor Bible Commentary (1966) would. The first is a significantly smaller work and so it is difficult to evaluate it in terms of why something might not have been included. Rather than any real ideological issues or change in opinion, it is possible that information was simply not included as a result of space. However, the 1966 commentary was published after Dodd's *Historical Tradition* and has similarities to Dodd regarding "the Jews." It is likely Dodd's work is at least partly responsible for the change, or depth displayed by Brown in 1966. A detailed

analysis of Raymond Brown's perception of "the Jews" in his 1966 Anchor Bible Commentary can be seen in chapter two.

CHAPTER 2

ANALYSIS OF BROWN'S WORKS ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN FROM 1960–1970

The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles (1960)

Raymond Brown's earliest work on the Gospel of John was a small book (102 pages) written in 1960 entitled *The Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles.* The introductory material lacks any mention of potential anti-Judaism or explanation of John's hostile use of "the Jews."[164] In Brown's later works, and in much of the academic writing on John later in the century, there is generally a section, sub-section, or at the very least a few sentences in the introduction dedicated to the Johannine polemic against "the Jews." In this work, the preliminary attention is noticeably absent.

Once inside the text, Brown discusses the material in John 1 without any displayed concern for anti-Judaism. In his commentary on the prologue, Brown states:

> The first half of the Gospel (1:1–12:50) shows us the rejection of Christ by the darkness (evil forces) and the Jews. Verses 9–11[165] sum up that rejection. The genuine light of the world came into the world he had created; and the world, directed to evil by man's sin, rejected him. He came to his own land, and the people that had been prepared for his coming by Moses and the prophets rejected him.[166]

[164] Brown does not place quotation marks around "the Jews" at all in this publication. All such are mine.

[165] Brown is referring to John 1:9–11.

[166] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 16.

In this passage, Brown has mentioned three groups that reject Christ: the darkness (evil forces), the Jews, and the world. Brown's explanation of why the world would reject Christ suggests that it (the world) is not entirely responsible; it has been *directed* to evil by man's sin. The Jews, however, are lumped together with the darkness. They have been prepared for his coming by Moses and the prophets—and they still reject him. While the world may have excuses, the Jews do not; thus, in Brown's commentary, the Jews are complicit with the darkness (evil forces) that rejects Christ.

Later in this same section (dealing with chapter one) Brown states:

> Just as a new creation replaces the old, a new covenant replaces the old covenant with Israel on Sinai, because the Chosen People rejected Christ. A constant theme in the Gospel is Christ's replacement of the institutions, Temple, and the feasts of the Jews. This is summed up poetically in verses 14–18. For the Word became flesh (flesh means human nature) and set up his Tabernacle in our midst (Conf., "dwelt among us"). One of the signs of God's pact with Israel in Sinai was the Tabernacle made in the desert. The Tabernacle and its later successor, the Temple, were the seat of divine presence among God's people, the seat of God's glory. In the new covenant, the humanity of the Word, his flesh, becomes the supreme localization of divine presence and glory.[167]

We will discuss the full implication of these statements when discussing the revision of this work later. However, once again, Brown does not frame these statements with any qualifier like "John says…" Thus, he does not distance himself from the negative statements made by the Gospel towards "the Jews." In addition, as Brown demonstrates how the author of John systematically removes the pillars of Judaism in order to replace them with Jesus, he does not take the time to contextualize the statements as being from a different place and time. What results is the possible communication to the reader, not that these were specific issues for the Johannine community, but that Jesus did replace the pillars of Judaism and that the Gospel of John is our proof of that occurrence even in the present.

It is only when Brown discusses the conflict between John the Baptist and "the Jews" in 1:19 that we find out how he defines this group. Brown states:

[167] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 17.

> In the Synoptics we find hostility between the Jewish authorities, but no open clash. In John the Jews (note: in John this term means the hostile Jerusalem authorities)[168] are in direct attack from the very beginning. The whole of John is a trial of Christ by the leaders of his people and the Baptist is the first trial witness. The guardians of national religion wish to know by what authority he baptizes.[169]

Brown clarifies that the Jews in John are not all Jews; they are a subgroup: the hostile Jerusalem authorities. While this interpretation is a strategy that can be used to lessen the hostility towards the Jews, it is not clear that this is Brown's agenda here. There is no indication that at this time Brown has an awareness that would cause him to navigate away from anti-Judaism. Brown has identified these Jews as authorities based on their function in the Gospel. For Brown, the Jews are the leaders of the people and the guardians of national religion. They are not the common religious Jew, but those religious Jews with power, who in Jesus' time were hostile to his ministry because of his threat to the national religious system. The fact that Brown does not specifically discuss historical issues in this publication could leave the impression that Brown considers the events described by John to have happened during the ministry of Jesus. This is very important because Brown will address this with more clarity over time.

When discussing John 7 and 8, Brown again does not qualify the Gospel's potentially anti-Jewish statements, but instead reads negativity where John leaves ambiguity. John 7:34–5 states:

> [34]You will seek me and will not find me; and where I am you cannot come. [35]The Jews therefore said among themselves, "Where is he going that we shall not find him? Will he go to those among the dispersed and teach the Gentiles?"

As Brown comments on this passage, he states:

> Jesus warns the Jews that they have but a short time to accept him; like wisdom he can be found only by those who sincerely search. The sneering Jewish retort about going to teach the Gentiles exemplifies Johannine irony, for that is precisely what Jesus will do in his Church. [170]

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[168] This parenthetical insertion is Brown's.

[169] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 18.

[170] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 45.

By describing the response as a "sneering Jewish retort" Brown has assumed hostility on the part of the Jews in an otherwise ambiguous passage. Furthermore, Brown's commentary that states, "that is precisely what Jesus will do in his Church," alludes to the rejection of the Jews, and the replacement of them by the Church. However, his mention of Johannine irony indicates an understanding that the author is not just reporting history, but has employed his own skill to affect the mood of the Gospel in such a way that the Jews are portrayed negatively. In discussing this passage, Brown attributes negativity to the Jews without distancing himself from the sentiment or clarifying that these are John's thoughts and not Brown's. Thus it is hard to know how much of the negative sentiment is Brown's (if any) and how much is an interpretation of what he thinks is the author's sentiment. In any case, this lack of clarification displays a lack of awareness to potential anti-Jewish hostility.

Similarly, when dealing with the passage in John 8:44 where Jesus calls "the Jews" children of the devil, Brown comments:

> When they (the Jews) retort that they have come from God, Jesus denies it. He should know for he has come from God. Rather they are of the devil, who lied in the Garden of Eden and brought death into the world through sin; and they are liars like their father.[171]

Again, instead of tempering or contextualizing John's remarks, Brown increases the negative perception of the Jews (already present in the text). Once more he calls the Jewish response a "retort," interpreting their response to be combative rather than any number of other possibilities. Additionally, by linking the "lying" of the Jews of Jesus' time to the event in the Garden of Eden, Brown makes the passage more biting than the Gospel text. He states that as the devil lied, he brought death into the world through sin. As Brown then states that the Jews are liars like their father, the unspoken allusion is that they too will bring death into the world through sin, an allusion which becomes manifest in the Passion of John.

This contrasts sharply with Brown's interpretation of Pilate in John 18:38 where he asks, "What is truth?" Brown explains that, "Pilate's question is an example of

[171] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 49.

misunderstanding, not cynicism."[172] While Brown gives Pilate the benefit of the doubt, assuming that his question is driven by a lack of understanding rather than malicious intent, he has not allowed the same possibility of similar intentions with the Jews.

The last point to make regarding this publication is Brown's handling of the Johannine passion. In John 19:14–15, Pilate presents the scourged Jesus to the Jews. Their response is to say "Crucify Him." The Gospel itself presents this as a quote coming from "the Jews." It states:

> [14]Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" [15]They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor."

When Brown comments on this he states, "In their rejection of Jesus, the people who once claimed God as their king are forced to accept Caesar as their king."[173]

While earlier in this work Brown explicitly defines "the Jews" as the Jerusalem authorities, here "the Jews" are the populace. They are not an elevated and isolated group of religious Jews. In fact, Brown will go on to say (again without qualification) that, "the meaning of the trial is now clear; the presence of Jesus has provoked judgment whereby the Chosen People have abandoned their birthright."[174] Again, this is not a particular group of Jews such as the religious authorities, but the entire people; and according to Brown, they now have given up their rights as the chosen people. This sentiment is similar to Brown's commentary on John 7–8 where Brown alluded to the Church's replacement of the Jews and to the Gentile mission.[175] The language that Brown uses here (the surrendering of birthright) is reminiscent of Esau giving up his birthright,[176] and once

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[172] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 87.

[173] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89.

[174] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89.

[175] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 49: Recall Brown states, "The sneering Jewish retort about going to teach the Gentiles exemplifies Johannine irony, for that is precisely what Jesus will do in his Church."

[176] Genesis 25.

again rings of supersessionism.[177] It is important to note that Brown does not mark this change of interpretation from "authorities" to "people."

However, in commenting on the next section, Brown's interpretation shifts again. He states:

> To emphasize the really guilty, John says that Pilate handed Jesus over "to them," i.e., to the chief priests, to be crucified (although, obviously it was the Roman soldiers who took charge).[178]

Here, "the Jews" are not the people; they are the chief priests (arguably having the same effect as the Jerusalem authorities). Thus, while his own commentary can be used to document the back and forth shift of interpretation, it is unclear whether the lack of explanation is an oversight on Brown's part or an unconscious move to accommodate John's use of "the Jews" in the Passion, where certain contexts suggest the presence of a crowd.

Another thing worth noting in this section is Brown's clarification that it was the Roman soldiers that took charge of the crucifixion. While this could be a strategy on Brown's part to avoid potential anti-Judaism, again he has not given us reason in this publication to think that he is actively looking for ways to make the Gospel less anti-Jewish. When commenting on earlier passages, Brown has credited the Romans (Pilate) with misunderstanding though he was not as sympathetic to the Jews. It may simply be that, historically, Brown thinks that a crucifixion in a Roman province must have been under the active governing and control of Rome. However, without any explanation on his part, it is not possible to know.

In 1960, while undertaking his first publication on John, Brown does not display awareness of potential anti-Judaism in the text. It is unclear whether some of his statements indicate the presence of anti-Judaism in Brown himself or a failure to distinguish his own opinions from what he perceives John's to be. In the beginning of this work, Brown explicitly defines "the Jews" as the hostile Jerusalem authorities who are zealous for their national religion. However at the end of the publication when the crowds

[177] As Esau surrendered his birthright to Jacob, the Jews have given up their birthright, leaving the mantle of chosenness to a new group, arguably the Church. Brown does not actually say this, but the "giving up of birthright" brings the Jacob/Esau story to mind and the subsequent logic follows naturally.

[178] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89.

are before Pilate in John 19, Brown makes the equation between "the Jews" and the entire populace, although it is unclear whether this is deliberate or not. Here in 1960, because Brown does not clarify otherwise, it appears that he considers the Gospel events to be historical, located during the time of Jesus.

There are no sources cited in this commentary. Therefore, while we can speculate about possible influences, there is no way to determine what may have influenced Brown's interpretation of the Jews in John at this point. During the years preceding this publication, Brown had earned his S.T.D. (1955) at St. Mary's Seminary, and finished his Ph.D. (1958) under William Foxwell Albright at Johns Hopkins University. Immediately afterwards, Brown spent a year (1958–1959) in Jerusalem working on the Dead Sea Scrolls. While Brown has given credit for his initial interest in John to a graduate seminar that he took with Albright while at Johns Hopkins,[179] none of the theses/dissertations for his degrees were focused comprehensive works on the Gospel of John.[180] During this time also, forces within the Catholic Church were still debating the degree to which the use of historical criticism was compatible with faith. As this was an issue that was very important to Brown, he spent considerable effort fighting for the continued use of biblical critical methods by Catholic scholars. Thus, while this commentary likely came from the research done for Albright's seminar, the Gospel of John was not the focal point of Brown's academic attention in the years immediately preceding this commentary.

This small commentary was published in 1960, just five years before *Nostra Aetate* and twenty years after the Holocaust. It was the same year that Jules Isaac met with Pope John XXIII, the meeting that changed the course of Vatican II to include the Jewish issue in the council's work. Brown's commentary displays no hint of the changes that were coming. For our purposes, this book represents the starting point. Within less than a decade, the "teaching of contempt" would be exposed and biblical interpretation would begin to display an awakened conscience regarding negative portrayal of the Jews in the Gospels.

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[179] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* VII.

[180] His doctoral work did involve the Semitic background of the New Testament, which allows us to see his general views on John's Gospel as being closer to Judaism than Hellenism as a trend in his New Testament views and not isolated to this Gospel.

The Gospel According to John I–XII (1966)

In 1966, *The Gospel According to John I–XII* was published. It was the first of two volumes on the Gospel of John for the Anchor Bible series. Here, Brown addresses John's use of "the Jews" in the introductory material. He dedicates about six pages to a section called "Argument with the Jews," which is part of a larger section called "Destination and Purpose of the Fourth Gospel."[181] Our first hint that Brown's perspective on how he handles "the Jews" is changing is that the term is now enclosed in quotation marks whereas in 1960 it was not. This distinguishes the Gospel's usage of "the Jews" from modern Jews and reminds the reader that the term is not to be taken literally.[182]

Contrary to 1960, where Brown defines "the Jews" as the Jerusalem authorities, in this work six years later Brown shows how the term "Jews" has various meanings depending on the context and the verse in which it is used. He states:

> When Jesus is speaking to a foreigner, as to the Samaritan in 4:22, he uses the Jews as no more than a religious nationalistic designation (see also 18:33, 35). In passages that speak of the feasts or the customs of the Jews (2:6, 13, 7:2) there may be nothing opprobrious in the use of the term. Moreover there is one stratum of the Johannine material particularly evident in 11–12, where the term the Jews simply refers to Judeans and thus covers both Jesus' enemies and those who believe in him… Leaving aside these exceptions… the Fourth Gospel uses "the Jews" as almost a technical title for the religious authorities, particularly those in Jerusalem who are hostile to Jesus.[183]

Even though by the end of Brown's 1960 work he interprets "the Jews" to be the populace and not just the Jerusalem authorities, it is unclear in that work how aware

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[181] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXX–LXXVII.

[182] Francis J. Maloney, *The Gospel According to John* (Sacra Pagina 4; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1998), 9–10: Maloney explains the practice of putting "the Jews" in John in quotation marks in his commentary on John. He states, "The expression 'the Jews' in this Gospel must always be placed within quotation marks because it does not represent the Jewish people. A critical reading of the Johannine Gospel makes it clear that 'the Jews' are those characters in the story who have made up their minds about Jesus…Jewish people as such are not represented by the term 'the Jews' and the Fourth Gospel must not be read as if they were."

[183] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, LXXI. Brown states this again on page 44 when dealing with "the Jews" sent to John the Baptist and again on 172 when discussing the Samaritan woman in John 4.

Brown is of the implicit connection he makes, since he never modifies his original definition. What is notable in his 1966 commentary is that Brown designates from the beginning different uses of "the Jews" based on context. Thus, he explicitly states that "the Jews" are not always the "authorities." However, with only a few exceptions, Brown still asserts that most uses of "the Jews" are negative. Also new to this work is Brown's reference to "the Jews" as a technical title. What he is saying is that "the Jews" have more than just historical value in the Gospel; they play a role as well. In the drama of the Gospel, "the Jews" are the antagonists who function as the enemy to Jesus. Not all Jews will be "Jews" in the negative, Johannine sense of the word, and as displayed earlier, even "the Jews" are not always negative. This can be seen again in the detailed commentary section of this book as Brown discusses Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman in John 4. He states:

> The Jews against whom Jesus elsewhere speaks harshly really refers to that section of the Jewish people that is hostile to Jesus, and especially to their rulers. Here, speaking to a foreigner, Jesus gives to the Jews a different significance, and the term refers to the whole Jewish people. This line is a clear indication that the Johannine attitude to the Jews cloaks neither an anti-Semitism of the modern variety nor a view that rejects the spiritual heritage of Judaism.[184]

Before we address the other issues, note how Brown's definition of "the Jews" is different from what it was before. In the earlier passage, the negative use of "the Jews" primarily referred to the Jewish authorities. Here they are the rulers and *that section of the Jewish people that is hostile to Jesus*. The fluid nature of his definition of "the Jews" indicates that at this time Brown does not have a firm grasp of who he thinks "the Jews" are. This will become evident again in discussing later passages.

In this passage Brown suggests three things: first, the Jews to whom Jesus' harsh words are directed are not all the Jews, but a subgroup of hostile Jews including the Jewish rulers. Second, Jesus' negativity towards the Jews is one of mutual hostility; it is because the Jews are hostile to Jesus that the Johannine Jesus speaks harshly back. Third, the Gospel is not anti-Semitic nor does it reject Judaism. The combination of these three

[184] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 172.

assertions indicates an attempt on Brown's part to navigate around potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel.

As Jesus speaks to this foreign woman, he uses the term "the Jews" to include the whole Jewish people towards whom he has no animosity. In fact, Brown rejects Bultmann's notion that when the Johannine Jesus says in verse 4:22, "You people worship what you do not understand, while we understand what we worship," he speaks the "we" as a Christian opposed to Jews and Samaritans.[185] Brown argues, "such exegesis does not take seriously the historical setting given to the episode."[186] Since Brown's interpretation of John 4 is that Jesus is speaking as a Jew, the hostility that Brown has described between Jesus the Jew and other hostile Jews is an intra-Jewish dispute; thus, "the Jews" to whom Jesus speaks harshly would be a subgroup. For Brown, however, these *hostile* Jews include more than just the authorities.

In his commentary of John 7–8, the tone of Brown's statements has changed significantly since 1960. In addition, in this section his definition of "the Jews" has been modified again. When discussing 7:1 where "'The Jews' were looking for a chance to kill him," Brown states, "…this agrees with the connotation that they are the Jerusalem authorities."[187] He elaborates further on "the Jews" when discussing 7:20–35. In that passage, the Gospel uses "the Jews" (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι), the authorities (οἱ ἄρχοντες), and the crowd (ὁ ὄχλος), all of whom are in hostile dialogue with Jesus. In an attempt to explain the different parties, Brown states:

> If this crowd is distinguished from "the Jews" and from "the people of Jerusalem" (25) who knew of the plot, it is quite plausible that there were many, especially pilgrims, who knew nothing about an intent to kill Jesus. But even if Jesus is speaking primarily to "the Jews," that is, the authorities, the fact remains that in the Gospel picture by the end of the Jerusalem ministry *the crowd* will have been swayed by the authorities to ask for Jesus' death (Mark xv 11).[188]

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[185] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 172.

[186] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 172.

[187] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 306.

[188] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 317.

According to Brown's explanation thus far, the *typical* Johannine usage of the term "the Jews" refers to the hostile Jewish authorities. There are exceptions to this. By the end of the Gospel when "the Jews" call for Jesus' death, the Gospel by context will suggest that they are the authorities, but "the Jews" will also refer to the crowds who have been swayed by their leaders. This would offer some clarity except that Brown will change this definition again later in this same commentary.

Recall that when discussing 7:35 in his 1960 publication, Brown adds negativity to the already negative text by stating:

> Jesus warns the Jews that they have but a short time to accept him; like wisdom he can be found only by those who sincerely search. The sneering Jewish retort about going to teach the Gentiles exemplifies Johannine irony, for that is precisely what Jesus will do in his Church.[189]

In his 1966 commentary, there is no mention in this verse of a "sneering Jewish retort." Instead Brown's own translation says that Jesus' statements caused them "to exclaim to one another."[190] He discusses the Johannine irony present in this verse in the "Literary Analysis" section on this passage. Using a chart, he highlights a literary pattern in 8:33–36, where in a series of misunderstandings, "the Jews" without realizing it, ironically speak the truth.[191] Brown states:

> In each of the misunderstandings, "the Jews" ironically speak a truth. The one in 7 concerned the possibility of Jesus going off to teach the Greeks, and this came true in the Church. The one here concerns the possibility of his killing himself, and of course, he will voluntarily lay down his life (10:17–18).[192]

By concentrating on the literary construction of the author of John, and less on the disagreement between "the Jews" and Jesus, the explanation serves to place distance between the historical event and the craft of the writer. It reminds the reader that in this

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[189] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 45.

[190] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 311.

[191] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 349.

[192] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 349.

passage "the Jews" have been designed by the author of John to function as the enemy in this narrative, thus lessening the historical negativity of "the Jews."

Brown's analysis of John 8 is also different than it was in 1960. Brown's voice is much less incriminating. He discusses this passage in the greater context of the Church and Synagogue conflict, as well as freedom and slavery themes in the Gospel.[193] Incidentally, Brown redefines "the Jews" here as "those who in the ordinary Johannine meaning of the word are those who are hostile to Jesus" (not just the hostile Jerusalem authorities as they were in 1960 or earlier in chapter seven).[194]

Recall that when discussing 8:44 in his 1960 publication, Brown states:

> When they (the Jews) retort that they have come from God, Jesus denies it. He should know for he has come from God. Rather they are of the devil, who lied in the Garden of Eden and brought death into the world through sin; and they are liars like their father.[195]

Here in his 1966 commentary, Brown explains:

> The mention of Jesus' Father in vs 38 is countered with an implicit rejection by "the Jews" in 39. This causes Jesus to harden his attitude. In vs 39, still insisting that they are children of Abraham… he says that their works betray a demonic descent. This variation in statement is trying to capture the same idea the Paul gives expression to in Romans ix 7: "Not all who are descendant from Abraham are children of Abraham." That spiritual characteristics were required to be truly worthy of Abraham is also found in roughly contemporary Jewish thought; *Pirqe Aboth* v 22 says: "A good eye, a lowly spirit, and a humble mind are the marks of the disciples of Abraham our father."[196]

Unlike the one 1960, in this 1966 commentary, Brown does not connect "the Jews" to the Serpent in the Garden. Instead, by suggesting that Jesus' hardened attitude was a response to his rejection by "the Jews," he seems to suggest that Jesus' attitude towards "the Jews" is not as hostile as it might seem because he (Jesus) is not the initiator of the conflict. Furthermore, by reframing the "children of Abraham" exchange as a common debate among both early Christians and first-century Jews (citing both Romans and *Pirqe*

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[193] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 362.

[194] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 362.

[195] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 49.

[196] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 363.

Aboth), Brown has explained the hostility, thus lessening the anti-Jewish impact of the passage.

Brown spends 16 pages commenting on this section (8:31–59), contextualizing the passage by relying on various forms of scholarship, yet inserting very little of his own voice.[197] However at the end of this section, Brown does two things that display sensitivity to anti-Judaism. First, he questions the charge that there was no religious reason for the Jewish authorities to persecute Jesus. He states:

> It is difficult to avoid the impression created by all the Gospels that the Jewish authorities saw something blasphemous in Jesus' understanding of himself and his role. There is no convincing proof that the only real reason why Jesus was put to death was because he was a social, or ethical reformer, or because he was politically dangerous.[198]

Brown is refuting the accusation against "the Jews" that the religious charges against Jesus were fabricated and their real motivation was political, that Jesus was a threat to their power. By suggesting that the Gospels portray a situation where Jesus caused real religious concern among the Jewish authorities and that no proof to the contrary has been found, Brown puts forward the possibility that even without malicious intent, "the Jews" could have had religious reason to condemn Jesus. However, Brown affirms the historical accuracy of the Gospels in their portrayal of hostility by "the Jews," displaying his tendency in biblical interpretation to treat the information in the Gospels as plausible historical evidence.

The second thing Brown does is directly address his reader to combat hostility towards "the Jews." He says:

> Perhaps here we should re-emphasize that a chapter like John 8 with its harsh statements about "the Jews" must be understood and evaluated against the polemic background of the times when it was written. To take literally a charge like that of vs.44 and to think that the Gospel imposes on Christians the belief that the Jews are children of the devil is to forget the time-conditioned element in Scripture. Lest the picture seem too dark, we must remember that this same

[197] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 352–68.

[198] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 368.

> Fourth Gospel records the saying of Jesus that salvation comes from the Jews (4:22).[199]

In this section especially, it is clear that Brown's awareness has grown. Reminding his reader that the Fourth Gospel was influenced by its historical circumstances, Brown clearly speaks out against potential anti-Judaism.

An odd insertion to this otherwise contextual teaching moment is Brown's insertion of John 4:22, "Salvation is from the Jews." Until this point, Brown uses the historical context of John 8 to explain why one cannot import the hostile sentiment of these passages into the modern era. Brown's use of John 4 does not contribute to the historical understanding of this passage, but is an apology on behalf of the Gospel, reminding the reader that the hostile sentiments in John 8 must be weighed in the balance of John 4. On the one hand, Brown displays how even if one wishes to draw upon scripture as prescriptive for life, one must understand the plurality of opinion expressed even in one Gospel. On the other hand, the positive remarks made by Jesus towards "the Jews" in John 4 are important to Brown's argument that the Gospel of John is not anti-Jewish. This displays an active awareness on Brown's part and is an example of a strategy that he uses to deflect a charge that the Gospel is anti-Jewish.

Historical Placement of Gospel Events

In this work, Brown explains why the enemies of Jesus are "the Jews." In doing so, he discusses the historical placement of Gospel events. He says:

> The Gospel was written we believe after A.D. 70… For the most part, the Jews who had accepted Jesus were now simply Christians and part of the Church, so that when Christians spoke of the Jews without qualification they were referring to those who had rejected Jesus and remained loyal to the Synagogue…thus, 'the Jews' was a term used with a connotation of hostility to Christians. In the Fourth Gospel, then, the evangelist uses the term with the meaning that it had in his own time.[200]

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[199] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 368.

[200] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXXII. Interestingly enough while this passage accounts for how in John's Gospel a Jewish Jesus could have as his enemies "the Jews," and perhaps suggests that Jesus himself was likely not anti-Jewish, it by no means extricates the Gospel of John from being anti-Jewish. In fact, it does just the opposite, explaining without actually using the term "anti-

What Brown asserts is that the language of the author's time post 70 C.E. has been inserted into the Gospel story set decades earlier. It is unlikely that Jesus' community in the first half of the century used the term "the Jews" as "other" because most of them were Jews, and there was no Christian community. It is noteworthy that in this passage Brown has not equated "the Jews" to the authorities; in fact, there is no mention of them. Instead, "the Jews" are those who are hostile to Jesus.

However inconsistent his definition of "the Jews" may be, Brown makes explanation for the awkwardness inherent in a situation where the Jewish Jesus uses the term "the Jews" in a negative sense. Continuing to give context, Brown explains how in a post- 70 C.E. climate, many of the religious groupings of Jesus' time no longer had meaning. He states:

> The destruction of the temple had simplified Judaism. Thus, only the chief priests and the Pharisees remain in John–the chief priests because their role in the Sanhedrin and the trials of Jesus was too essential a part of the story to be forgotten, the Pharisees because they are precisely that Jewish sect which survived the calamity of 70. The Judaism of the time in which the Gospel was written was Pharisaic Judaism.[201]

Brown suggests that the Evangelist has not forgotten the true circumstances of Jesus' ministry. His usage of the term "the Jews" indicates that the Evangelist believes that the Jews of his own time are the spiritual descendants of the Jewish authorities who were hostile to Jesus during his ministry.[202] In other words, those who in Jesus' time were the Pharisees, by the author's time were "the Jews."

Brown mentions this again when discussing the emissaries of the Pharisees that come to question John the Baptist in 1:24. Brown states, "The Judaism that survived the

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Judaism" how this Gospel could come to see the Jews as "other" and an enemy because it was in fact Christian versus Jew.

[201] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXXII; The Pharisees as the predominant Jewish leadership during the author's time period is also discussed on 44.

[202] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXXII. Brown makes an interesting point as he notes that in the Synoptics, the attack on the Pharisees or the Jews is for hypocrisy or their moral or social behavior. In the Gospel of John, the attack centers on their refusal to believe in Jesus. The moral and social issues present in other Gospels are not the core issues of contention between the Church and the Synagogue during the time (or location) of the composition of John's Gospel; instead the issue of contention is acceptance of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God.

destruction of the temple was of strongly Pharisaic persuasion and, for a Gospel written with this situation in mind, "Pharisees" and "Jews" would be the most meaningful titles for the Jewish Authorities."[203]

In John 9, Jesus heals a blind man. The newly healed man and his family are then in danger of excommunication by "the Jews." According to Brown, this chapter is a prime example of the insertion of events from the author's time into Jesus' time decades earlier. He addresses this by saying:

> Here we pass from the arguments of Jesus' ministry to the apologetics of Church and Synagogue in the era of spreading Christianity, and the evangelist shows us the prolongation into his own time of the debate over Jesus that had already begun to rage when Jesus was alive… the "we" that is heard on the lips of the Pharisees is really the voice of their logical descendants, that is, the Jews at the end of the 1st century who have once and for all rejected the claims of Jesus of Nazareth and who regard his followers as heretics. The "we" on the lips of the former blind man is the voice of the Christian apologists who think of the Jews as malevolently blinding themselves to the obvious truth implied in Jesus' miracles… It is almost unbelievable that during Jesus' lifetime a formal excommunication was leveled against those who followed him.[204]

While Brown denies the possibility that excommunication occurred during the time of Jesus, he does believe that it was something that the Johannine community did face. Brown states:

> Judaism of the days after the destruction of the Temple thought it absolutely necessary to cut off the Jews who believed in Jesus. Danger of extinction usually forces a religion to become more rigidly orthodox in order to survive, and Judaism was no exception…after 70, the Jews who believed in Jesus were looked on as possibly subversive factor… throughout the 80s there was an organized attempt to force the Christian Jews out of the synagogues…the twelfth benediction, ca.85, was a curse on the minim or heretics, primarily Jewish-Christians.[205]

In essence, Brown proposes a post-70 C.E. history where in a matter of 20 years, Jewish-Christians had become increasingly persecuted by a Judaism that had become

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[203] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 44.

[204] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 368.

[205] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, LXXIV.

more and more intolerant of this divergent group.[206] For Brown, it is in response to this Jewish persecution that many of the hostile remarks in the Gospel of John are made. This "history" is of vital importance for Brown, who uses it to contextualize the polemic against "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel. However, Brown shows sensitivity to the Jewish concern by suggesting that their vigor in persecuting the Johannine community was a common sociological phenomenon resulting because of renewed orthodoxy. In other words, in an effort to become more orthodox, religious groups sometime resort to the persecution of those who may pose a threat to the new order. By explaining this, Brown suggests that any group in the position of "the Jews" could have been guilty of the same behavior. Thus, this persecution is not an "evil" which is specific to "the Jews" who persecuted the early Christians, but a behavior common to those in similar socio-religious situations.

In his historical assessment of Gospel events, Brown has explained that certain events are from the time of Jesus. Recall that earlier he contested Bultmann's assertion that when Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman he spoke as a Christian. Brown argued instead that Bultmann "did not take seriously the historical setting of the episode."[207] This indicates Brown's interpretation that the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman would have its historical placement during the time of Jesus' ministry. Thus, Jesus would be speaking as a Jew to a Samaritan because the Jewish/Christian divisions would not have occurred yet. When discussing the Fourth Gospel's use of "the Jews," Brown asserts that the *language* of the Evangelist is being imported into the Gospel story. Those who were hostile to Jesus during his ministry would have been "Jews" in the time of the Evangelist. This is not to say that every event where the Gospel mentions "the Jews" should be located historically in the time of the Evangelist, but that *the term* is imported into the description of events, some of which would have taken place in the time of Jesus.

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[206] It is important to note here that while this is the heart of J. Louis Martyn's thesis in his book *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel*, this publication of Brown's was released before Martyn's book. Brown is relying on others such as W.D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: 1964), 275–276, and K.L. Carroll, "The Fourth Gospel and the exclusion of Christians from the Synagogues," BJRL 40 (1957–58), 19–32.

[207] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 172.

There are other events presented in the Gospel that Brown clearly asserts did not occur during the time of Jesus, but actually took place during the author's time. John 9, where "the Jews" are excommunicating people from the synagogues, is an example of this. Brown attributes both the event itself, and the language/dialogue between the blind man and "the Jews," to the time of the author, and not Jesus' time as the Gospel suggests. Thus, Brown's interpretation regarding the historical placement of these various scenes in the Gospel demonstrates his implicit belief that a progression of events, going from the time of Jesus' ministry, all the way to the time of the author, were combined to form the final Gospel narrative. This becomes important in the consideration of Brown's awareness of anti-Judaism. As Brown focuses on the author's historical situation, he is able both separate the polemic in John from the historical events of Jesus' ministry, minimizing the potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel.

To summarize Brown's 1966 position: Brown saw the Gospel's use of "the Jews" as having different meanings depending on the verse. His explanation of this in the introduction suggests a more sophisticated understanding than what Brown displays in 1960. Recall that in 1960 Brown officially defines "the Jews" as the "Jerusalem authorities," yet in certain places equates them to the populace without any acknowledgement of the change in definition. However, even in this work, Brown's definition of "the Jews" is inconsistent. Early in the introduction Brown states that aside from a few exceptions, the Fourth Gospel uses "the Jews" as the technical title for the religious authorities, particularly those in Jerusalem who are hostile to Jesus.[208] Later in this same publication, he will define "the Jews" as "the section of the Jewish people that are hostile to Jesus and especially their rulers,"[209] those who had rejected Jesus and remained loyal to the Synagogue (no mention of rulers),[210] the spiritual descendants of the Jewish authorities hostile to Jesus during his ministry,[211] and simply those who were

[208] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, LXXI.

[209] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 172.

[210] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, LXXII.

[211] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, LXXII.

hostile to Jesus.[212] These definitions fluctuate, including both authorities and average Jews, and applying at times to the time of Jesus and at other times to the time of the author. Thus, while Brown has demonstrated a more sophisticated understanding of the complexity surrounding John's use of the term "the Jews," his own writings once again suggest that as in 1960, he has not fully defined in his own mind who "the Jews" are.

In regard to the Fourth Gospel's historical placement of "the Jews," there are hostile "Jews" both in Jesus' time and during the time of the author. On the one hand, when the Gospel describes events between Jesus and "the Jews" that Brown would locate during the time of Jesus, he acknowledges that *the term* "the Jews" has been unnaturally imported into the Gospel story by the author. However, there are events described (John 9) where both the term "the Jews" *and the actual event* must be located during the time of the author decades later. Thus, while Brown is not willing to sacrifice certain events that the author locates historically during the time of Jesus, he is able to explain certain oddities like the author's use of "the Jews" as well as the excommunication from the synagogue by locating those things during the time of the author.

There have been some other changes since 1960 regarding Brown's handling of "the Jews" in John. Here, he places the term "the Jews" in quotation marks. While Brown spends much time explaining the context of John's use of "the Jews" and the polemic against them, he never explicitly mentions the word "anti-Judaism." He does, however, state that John is not anti-Semitic[213] because the Evangelist is not condemning a race or people, but those in opposition to Jesus. Brown does *suggest* that because there are both good, believing Jews and persecuting, non-believing Jews, the category of "the Jews" does not negatively characterize all Jews, at least not in a way to deem the text anti-Jewish.

There can be no question that the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican provided important context for understanding the changes from 1960 to 1966. Vatican II opened under Pope John XXIII in 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI in 1965. Pertinent

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[212] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 362.

[213] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, LXXII. It is an interesting thing that Brown does here, as he seems to be skirting the real issue. I think most can agree that John is not anti-Semitic, however, whether John is anti-Jewish is another question that Brown does not address here.

to this discussion was the declaration *Nostra Aetate,*[214] which came out of Vatican II.[215] Recall from chapter 1, it dealt specifically with the Church's relationships to non-Christians, with a special section addressing the Jews. It spoke of the bond between the children of the New Covenant (Christians) and the children of Abraham (the Jews). It clearly stated that while some Jewish authorities and their followers were responsible for Jesus' death, the blame of this could not be placed on all Jews during the time of Jesus. Brown's interpretation of "the Jews" in this publication as the Jewish authorities and those who rejected Jesus is in line with these guidelines established in *Nostra Aetate*. Isolating John's "Jews" as a subgroup of the Jews places the responsibility of Jesus' death "on the Jewish authorities and their followers," removing culpability for Jesus' death from "all Jews of all time."[216] This allows for John to be historical in terms of sacred scripture and in regard to the culpability it places upon "the Jews," while at the same time allowing space to interpret John in such a way that the new positions in Catholic-Jewish relations are absorbed into Catholic biblical interpretation. Just as *Nostra Aetate* decries any type of anti-Semitism, so Brown's biblical interpretation clearly states that the Fourth Gospel is not anti-Semitic; and while Brown combats elements of potential anti-Judaism, he never actually uses the term in 1966. One difference between *Nostra Aetate* and Brown's position is in regard to the Jewish authorities. *Nostra Aetate* states, "the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ." This assertion of the role of the Jewish authorities is much stronger than Brown's statements in this 1966 commentary.

Nostra Aetate was monumental for the Catholic Church. Since Raymond Brown was an influential Catholic scholar, who had in the past grounded his scholarly work in

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[214] October 28, 1965.

[215] For more on this see Chapter 2.

[216] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89. Recall that in 1960, by the time Brown reached the Passion, he referred to "the Jews" as if they were the entire Jewish populace. He stated, "In their rejection of Jesus, the people who once claimed God as their king are forced to accept Caesar as their king," and "the meaning of the trial is now clear; the presence of Jesus has provoked judgment whereby the Chosen People have abandoned their birthright."

Catholic doctrine,[217] we might want to assume influence. But as much as Raymond Brown's biblical interpretation in his 1966 commentary is in line with *Nostra Aetate*, he does not actually give any explicit indication that it had any impact on him. There is not a single reference to Vatican II in this commentary. However, Brown was involved in the 1963 session of the Vatican Council, specifically the sessions where *Nostra Aetate* was being discussed and formulated. He was the *peritus*[218] (advisor) to his Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley, who was the Bishop of St. Augustine, Florida, and who had been the first American to become an ambassador for the Vatican.[219] Archbishop Hurley is remembered for his outspoken disapproval of Pope Pius XII because of what Hurley thought was a weak stand against the Nazis in World War II, and particularly because he thought the Pope did not do enough to help the Jews.[220] Brown's presence at Vatican II sessions during the formation of *Nostra Aetate* certainly indicates probable influence on his biblical interpretation.

The other major influence upon Brown's own biblical interpretation is the work of other scholars in the field. In this particular work, Brown is deeply indebted to Bultmann and Dodd. While he does not always cite them in specific sections, he seems to be in dialogue with them throughout this commentary. Recall that for Bultmann, οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι are viewed in the Gospel from the standpoint of Christian faith and are representatives of unbelief, the world.[221] Similarly, when discussing John 4:22, Bultmann suggested that the

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[217] Recall from Chapter 1 that as Raymond Brown argues for the use of biblical critical methods, he uses official Catholic statements to plead his case and back his argument.

[218] Peritus is Latin for "expert." It is the title given to Catholic theologians who are present to give advice during ecumenical councils. During Vatican II, many bishops that were present brought "periti" with them to help them understand the issues at hand.

[219] Witherup, "Biography of Raymond E. Brown, S.S.*,* 256. It was Archbishop Hurley who ordained Brown for the ministry and then released him to the Society of St. Sulpice so that Brown could do further work in biblical studies.

[220] Benet S. Exton, Review of Charles R. Gallagher, Review of *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII.* n.p. [Cited 11 January 2009]. Online: http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/columnsbysubject.php?sub_id=4. Because of his strong feelings that the Pope was not doing enough for the Jews, Hurley on his own began to secretly confer with the allies during his time in Rome. He was reassigned to St. Augustine, FL, where afterwards he would meet Raymond Brown.

[221] Bultmann, *The Gospel of John,* 86.

"we" were Christians as opposed to both Samaritans and Jews. Brown disagrees with Bultmann, saying that he "did not take seriously the historical setting of the episode."[222] In contrast to Bultmann, Brown cites J. W. Bowker in his introductory material. Bowker argues in his article, "The Origin and Purpose of St. John's Gospel,"[223] against the traditional Bultmann approach that "the Jews" are the representatives of darkness. Instead, he argues that at least for the first twelve chapters of John, it is really the Pharisees who are the enemy of Jesus and many of the Jews end up becoming believers, making "the Jews" potentially more positive than originally thought. Brown, however, disagrees with this as well. Navigating a middle ground, Brown rejects both views, the one making "the Jews" in its entirety a negative entity written from the perspective of the Christian, and the other trying to spin the traditionally negative role into a positive one.

True to the form established in other areas of his opinion on John, Brown seems to be most in line with Dodd. Brown's explanation of who "the Jews" are in his introductory material most resembles the similar explanation given by C. H. Dodd in his footnote from *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel*, published in 1963 between these first two Brown publications.[224] Recall from chapter two, that in this footnote, Dodd explains how the writer of John seems to use οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι imprecisely, and so Dodd goes through a rapid treatment of the different ways that the Gospel uses "the Jews." This format as well as the information ("the Jews" having multiple meanings depending on context: those hostile to Christ, the Jewish authorities, or Judeans) accords closely with what Brown includes in the introduction of this 1966 Anchor Bible Commentary.

Brown adopts Dodd's way of categorizing the Gospel's usage of "the Jews," yet at the same time sees the general Johannine use of "the Jews" as referring to those in dualistic opposition to Jesus (Bultmann). Thus, his own interpretation, while certainly closer to Dodd, is a mix of Dodd and Bultmann. In addition, Brown at this time also began investigating the impact that the author's contemporary situation (decades after the setting of the Gospel) might have had on the Gospel itself. The combination of new

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[222] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* 172.

[223] J. W. Bowker, "The Origin and Purpose of St. John's Gospel." *NTS* 11 (1964–1965): 398–408.

[224] Dodd, *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel,* 242.

Catholic statements regarding attitudes towards the Jews, both in contemporary attitude and biblical interpretation, as well as the combined work of Dodd and Bultmann accounts for the growing awareness in Brown's approach to "the Jews" in John.

The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI (1970)

In 1970, the second volume (29A) of the Anchor Bible Commentary series on the Gospel of John became available. It had been four years between the publication of the first volume and this second volume. The first volume covered chapters 1–12. This second volume covered the remainder of the Gospel. While Brown acknowledges in the preface that new information on the first half of the Gospel has been published since the release of the first volume, he does not attempt to update or revise the earlier volume.

In this volume, much of the evaluation regarding "the Jews" and potential anti-Judaism revolves around the Passion Narrative and specifically, Jesus before Pilate. Before investigating the historical aspects of the Passion, Brown addresses what he considers a more theological problem: whether the responsibility for the crucifixion of Jesus is to be placed on the whole Jewish nation of his time and even on subsequent generations of Jews.[225] He states:

> Embarrassing as this problem is to many Christians today, one must honestly recognize that it has its origins in NT generalizations about the Jews and in passages like Matt 27:25; John 7:19, 8:44; and 1 Thess 2:14–16. (While the hostility in these statements sprang from a polemic between Synagogue and Church, often the Christians hoped to arouse in Jews a guilt about the rejection of Jesus and thus to effect conversion.) This problem is not solved either by pretending that the respective NT authors did not mean what they said or by excising the offending passages…The solution lies in the acknowledgement that the books of both Testaments can serve as meaningful guides only when allowance is made for the spirit of the times in which they were written. Nevertheless, this is obviously more a theological than a historical problem.[226]

[225] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 792.

[226] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 792.

As Brown discusses the problem of continual Jewish culpability concerning the death of Jesus, he implies that his reader might be unwilling to face that this is a New Testament problem. Recognizing that this situation is embarrassing for Christians, he still insists that ignoring the problem does not make it disappear. Brown holds his Christian readers accountable, forcing them to deal with continual blame on "the Jews" as a NT problem and making them assume responsibility for their own biblical interpretation. For Brown, the way to handle this is to clearly set boundaries regarding the interpretation of scripture and its implementation in our lives, recognizing that not all of the biblical text should be taken as prescriptive. By suggesting that the hostile statements "sprang from a polemic between Synagogue and Church," the implication is that Brown no longer sees this situation as simply an intra-Jewish dispute. However, Brown suggests that even in the polemical context of these NT passages, the purpose of arousing Jewish guilt was for conversion and not condemnation. This functions for Brown in two ways. First, it weakens even the scriptural grounds for perpetual culpability; second, it strategically removes potential anti-Judaism from the passage. Brown rejects other strategies for navigating around anti-Judaism and replaces it with his own (apparent hostility was for the purpose of conversion, not condemnation). This effort to educate his reader displays an active attempt by Brown to combat potential anti-Judaism.

In preparation for his historical analysis of the Passion, Brown has created a section called "Historical Reconstruction of the Arrest and Trial of Jesus." Brown opens this section by stating:

> Moreover, since The Anchor Bible is directed to a mixed audience for some of whom this may be a sensitive question, we think it wise to clarify from the beginning our line of approach. One historical fact is lucidly clear: Jesus of Nazareth was sentenced by a Roman prefect to be crucified on the political charge that he claimed to be "the King of the Jews." On this, Christian, Jewish, and Roman sources agree. The real problem concerns whether and to what degree the Sanhedrin or the Jewish authorities of Jerusalem played a role in bringing about the crucifixion of Jesus.[227]

This section exists for the sole purpose of addressing the Jewish involvement in the crucifixion of Jesus, thus displaying a heightened awareness regarding hostility towards

[227] Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 792.

"the Jews." In his earlier publications, Brown tends to vacillate between whether "the Jews" were just the Jewish authorities or a larger group of Jews hostile to Jesus. Here, as in his 1960 work,[228] he has specified that the question of responsibility will revolve around Jewish authorities.[229]

Brown proceeds to evaluate the different views regarding the Jewish involvement in the sentencing and crucifixion of Jesus.[230] Brown delineates four positions. The first is what Brown calls the classical Christian position. It argues that, "the Jewish authorities were the prime movers in Jesus' arrest, trial and sentencing … while the Romans were little more than executioners."[231] The second position, which questions the formal character of the Sanhedrin trial, has the Jews passing no formal sentence, but being deeply involved in the legal formalities that were actually carried out by the Romans.[232] The third position sees the Romans as the primary movers who forced Jewish cooperation because they saw Jesus as a possible troublemaker; only a small portion of politically minded members of the Sanhedrin supported them.[233] Finally the fourth position suggests that there was no Jewish involvement in the crucifixion of Jesus, not even as a tool of the Romans. All references to any sort of Jewish involvement represent an apologetic falsification of history.[234] Brown dismisses this fourth position. He states:

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[228] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89. Recall that even though Brown vacillates between who "the Jews" are at the Passion (the people or the authorities), he specifies that the "them" to whom Pilate hands Jesus to order to be crucified are the chief priests.

[229] It is possible that even if Brown is thinking here that it was a wider group that ultimately made up "the Jews," that the authorities would have been the decision makers who led the wider group in regard to anti-Jesus hostility. In any case, Brown does not specify, thus leaving interpretation ambiguous.

[230] It is noteworthy that he has called the group of antagonists here, "Jewish authorities," and not "the Jews." This is not new; Brown thought of this group as the "Jerusalem authorities" even in 1960. What is noteworthy is having just earlier spoken that excising passages is not the proper way to deal with hostility towards "the Jews" in the Gospel, Brown has done something similar by translating "the Jews" as "Jewish authorities." This is arguably a strategy that he is using to avoid anti-Judaism in the text.

[231] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 792.

[232] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 792–793.

[233] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 793.

[234] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 792.

> One may sympathize with the last mentioned thesis as a reaction to centuries of anti-Jewish[235] persecution, often waged as a revenge for supposed Jewish responsibility for the crucifixion. Nevertheless, it has little claim to be recognized as scientifically respectable.[236]

The fact that Brown qualifies his dismissal of this last position, and is sympathetic to Jewish concerns, once again displays sensitivity to potential anti-Judaism. Sympathetic as he is though, Brown argues that the earliest layers of the Gospel narratives indicate a Jewish involvement in the crucifixion of Jesus.[237] He does not think it appropriate, however, to suppose that the Jewish authorities were almost completely responsible for the crucifixion. In fact, recall that even in Brown's 1960 work, he argues that although Pilate hands Jesus over to the chief priests to be crucified, "it was the Roman soldiers who took charge."[238]

Brown suggests that the early Church would have avoided blaming the death of Jesus on Rome for political reasons. He states, "It was obviously in the interests of the Christian Church, seeking tolerance from the Roman authorities under whom it had to live, to avoid blaming the Romans for the death of Jesus."[239] In arguing his point, Brown illustrates how the earlier Gospels are the harshest to Rome and the latter Gospels are more sensitive to Roman concern; Mark, Matthew, Luke, and then John go in that order from harshest to softest in regard to Roman involvement in the death of Jesus.[240] It is important to note that what Brown has suggested here is that political motivations have infiltrated the Gospel narratives. After a rapid but detailed analysis of the trial, Brown concludes that, "Despite the fact that we cannot gain certainty, it does seem like the prima facie Gospel position of almost total Jewish responsibility for the death of Jesus is

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[235] This is the first time that Brown has used the term "anti-Jewish" in these works.

[236] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 793.

[237] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 794.

[238] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89.

[239] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 794.

[240] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 794. See also Marcel Simon, *Verus Israel* (), for a similar argument.

exaggerated."[241] Brown thinks that the second or third view, suggesting a combination of Roman and Jewish involvement is most likely.

To decipher the extent of Roman and Jewish involvement in the trial of Jesus, Brown investigates issues of motivation. Why might the Jewish authorities or Rome have been concerned over Jesus' presence? Brown opens by saying that, "according to both Roman and Jewish sources, neither Pilate nor the Jewish priests of the house of Annas were admirable figures."[242] In other words, one does not have to be anti-Jewish or anti-Roman to have a negative view of these figures. Moving on, Brown suggests that Jesus easily could have been seen as a political threat to Rome, considering the Jewish revolutionary activity in Palestine during the 1st century. The Gospels describe Jesus as being hailed as king upon his entry into Jerusalem; Jesus may have caused disturbance around Passover, and Jesus' followers were bearing weapons in case of trouble.[243] Even if all these details are not historical, any of them might support Pilate's trepidation regarding Jesus. In essence, Brown is suggesting here that even the Gospels, with their favorable perspective towards Jesus, hint at signs of unrest that could have made the Roman government uneasy and suspicious.

Brown suggests that the Jewish authorities may have perceived Jesus to be a political threat as well.[244] He states, "By handing Jesus over to the Romans, the Jewish authorities may have sincerely believed that Jesus and his movement were politically dangerous."[245] However, Brown cautions against oversimplifications. The fact that the Jewish authorities might have seen Jesus as a political threat does not mean he was not a religious threat as well. He states:

> A second oversimplification that we caution against is the exclusion of all religious motivation from the minds of the Jewish authorities who handed Jesus

[241] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 797.

[242] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 798.

[243] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 798.

[244] Jesus suggested that the temple would be destroyed; this could have been taken literally to imply violent messianic claims.

[245] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 799.

> over to the Romans. If the authorities feared that Jesus would catalyze a revolutionary movement that might precipitate Roman action against the Temple, the priesthood, or the city, the danger was religious as well as political… Could this have been any less a religious problem than the prophet Jeremiah's outbursts against the Temple? If the priests wanted to get rid of Jesus because of their fear of Rome, this does not exclude a desire to get rid of him because he had attacked what was sacred in their eyes. There was a similar reaction to Jeremiah: "The man deserves the death sentence because he has prophesied against this city."[246]

By comparing Jesus to Jeremiah,[247] Brown suggests that when the temple, priesthood, and city are threatened, the religious establishment feels threatened and responds out of fear. The fear is warranted and the reactions understandable. Brown closes this section by stating, "There is scarcely a Christian church that cannot find in its history condemnations of good men leveled by religious assemblies with a similar variety of motives."[248]

Brown has accomplished several things with this section. First, he has displayed an overall concern to show that Jesus actually could have been a real threat to the groups in question. Their attack and eventual crucifixion of Jesus was not simply a malicious and unwarranted act by hypocritical individuals in power, but very possibly the protective measures of simply religious (and politically concerned) individuals, reacting against someone they saw as a potential disrupter and insurrectionist. Secondly, in this section Brown has attempted to minimize the anti-Jewish impact of the trial against Jesus and reinterpret it as a non-Jewish issue. By comparing this situation to Christian churches, and reminding readers that this occurs even in the Christian world, he is stating that this is not a case of "the Jews" versus Jesus, but the religious leaders versus one of their own whom they consider threatening. Thus Brown implies that Jewish culpability should be weighed in the balance of "let the one who is without sin cast the first stone." Similar to

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[246] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 800.

[247] One thing to note is that Jeremiah's opponents are portrayed in the Bible as being guilty and deserving of punishment. Thus, Brown's comparison of the Jewish authorities in Jeremiah to "the Jews" opposed to Jesus in John, which he seems to use to lessen the potential anti-Judaism in the passage may actually have the effect of highlighting their guilt instead. However, this is not Brown's intent.

[248] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 802.

his work in 1960, as Brown moves through this section, it is the Jewish authorities that were responsible for the trial and crucifixion of Jesus… not the general populace.[249]

This can be seen again when Brown deals with the scene of Jesus before Pilate. Regarding John's use of "the Jews," Brown states:

> Here the term undoubtedly has its special Johannine reference to the authorities, especially those at Jerusalem, who were hostile to Jesus; and we remember that usually it covers the Pharisees as well as the priests.[250]

This is reminiscent of Brown in 1960 where he sees "the Jews" as equivalent to "the hostile Jerusalem authorities." Recall that in 1966 (Volume I of the Anchor Bible Commentary on John), Brown's definition of "the Jews" fluctuated. Sometimes it was the Jewish authorities, and sometimes the definition was broadened to include a wider group, those who were hostile to Jesus. It seems that in dealing with the scene before Pilate, this group has become narrower again, implicating only the Jewish authorities residing in Jerusalem (not even Jewish authorities in other regions). However, it is noteworthy that Brown has qualified this sentence with the word "here," implying that in other places, "the Jews" has other meanings.

In the commentary section of this scene, Brown's discussion of Pilate is noteworthy. He states:

> The Johannine scenario is far more complicated and dramatic [than the Synoptic Gospels]. There are two stage settings: the outside court of the praetorium where "the Jews" are gathered; the inside room of the praetorium where Jesus is held prisoner. Pilate goes back and forth from one to the other. The atmosphere inside is one of calm and reason in which the innocence of Jesus is made clear to Pilate; outside there are frenzied shouts of hate as "the Jews" put pressure on Pilate to find Jesus guilty. Pilate's constant passing from one setting to the other gives external expression to the struggle taking place within his soul, for his certainty of Jesus' innocence increases at the same rate as does the political pressure forcing him to condemn Jesus.[251]

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[249] Also see, Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 849.

[250] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 849.

[251] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 858.

Brown's interpretation of John's Pilate is that he is a neutral figure caught between his conscience and the political demands of "the Jews." Later he states:

> While John has painted "the Jews" as dualistically opposed to Jesus and utterly refusing to believe in him, he has also given us examples of other reactions to Jesus where men neither refuse to believe nor fully accept Jesus for what he really is… We would look on the Johannine Pilate not as a personification of the State but as another representative of a reaction to Jesus that is neither faith nor rejection. Pilate is typical, not of the state, but of many, well-disposed men who would try to adopt a middle position in a struggle that is total.[252]

This information is important because this is one of the scenes where Rome (via Pilate) and "the Jews" are pictured together in the same scene requiring collaboration to crucify Christ. Similar to 1960, Brown still sees John's Pilate as a sympathetic figure while "the Jews" in this scene are depicted doing whatever necessary to ensure Jesus' death. However, this is different from 1960 not because Brown's interpretation of the Gospel has changed, but because his presentation of this interpretation has.

Recall that in 1960, when discussing Pilate, Brown said, "Pilate's question is an example of misunderstanding, not cynicism."[253] When discussing "the Jews" he stated, "In their rejection of Jesus, the people who once claimed God as their king are forced to accept Caesar as their king."[254] The difference is that in 1960, Brown's lack of contextual qualification makes it seem as if these sentiments could be his. The reader cannot distinguish whether Brown holds these negative opinions regarding "the Jews" or if he is simply communicating what he believes to be the Johannine sentiment. In this 1970 commentary, Brown has used language such as "stage settings," and "the Johannine Pilate." He even suggests that, "John has painted 'the Jews' as dualistically opposed to Jesus." Thus Brown clarifies that his comments are his interpretation of what the author of John is trying to communicate, and not his own sentiment.

In summary, similar to 1960, in this volume "the Jews" are the hostile Jerusalem authorities, Pharisees, and the chief priests. They are an elite group of religious people who oppose Jesus because he is a threat. This is where Brown shows himself to be

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[252] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 864.

[253] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 87.

[254] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89.

sensitive to potential anti-Judaism. In his section entitled "Historical Reconstruction of the Arrest and Trial of Jesus," Brown has explained that hostility against Jesus may not have ensued from malice or evil intention, but out of genuine concern by sincere, religious and politically concerned people. While Brown asserts that the Gospels are historical evidence that it was both the Romans and "the Jews" that were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus, he has defended both Roman and Jewish concerns in this section. In addition, he has reinterpreted these events in Christian language to help make this situation understandable to a potentially defensive Christian audience, communicating that Christians can and have made similar decisions for similar reasons as what is depicted in the Gospel of John against Jesus.

While his general biblical interpretation has remained the same since his 1960 commentary, in this publication he has placed distance between himself and his commentary by qualifying that it is the author of John that who negative sentiments towards "the Jews," and not Brown himself. In addition, Brown has attempted to contextualize even the negative statements in the Gospel.

Since the publication of his first commentary in 1960, Vatican II was convened and its statements on the Jews in *Nostra Aetate* were released. When this book was published in 1970, Brown still taught at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore. He was very active in service to the Church during the years between the publication of the two volumes of his Anchor Bible Commentaries on the Gospel of John. During this time, Brown was elected to membership in the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches in 1968, which he served on until 1993.[255] By papal nomination, Brown served as a consultor[256] for the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity from 1968 to 1973.[257] The changes that accounted for the differences between Brown's

[255] The purpose of the Faith and Order Commission is to work towards Christian unity and present one church, the Church of Jesus Christ. It is a commission designed to further ecumenical relations. The 4th meeting in 1963 was momentous because it was the first time the Catholic Church participated. Raymond Brown presented a paper entitled "The Unity and Diversity in New Testament Ecclesiology." See Raymond E. Brown, "The Unity and Diversity in New Testament Ecclesiology," *NovT* 6 (1963), 298–308.

[256] This is an expert who advises the prefect, members, and staff on subjects relating to their expertise.

[257] This was also an appointed position also working from the Catholic side on ecumenical relations, in part but not exclusively with the World Council of Churches and the Faith and Order

1966 and 1960 commentaries account for much of the change between this 1970 publication and the 1960 commentary as well. Change between 1970 and 1966 is harder to track because the materials addressed in these two commentaries are the two halves of the Gospel and not repetitive handlings of the same passages. Both commentaries display Brown's conscious effort to distance himself from the negative statements made by the Gospel, as well as efforts to diffuse the hostility of the passages themselves. Volume II (1970) has moments where Brown adopts a "teaching mode" with his readers, educating them and attempting to keep them from gleaning anti-Jewish sentiments from the Gospel. This is not seen in volume I (1966) to the degree that it is seen here. However, it is possible this is as much because of the increased hostility displayed in the Passion narrative as any elevated sensitivity in Brown between the years 1966 and 1970. Most of the publications that Brown drew upon for the Passion sections of volume II were all available to him in 1966.[258] In fact, many of them were available in 1960; thus positing reasons for the subtle changes based on new publications is not possible. It is likely that Brown's involvement in Vatican II combined with his appointment to the Commission on Faith and Order and the Secretariat for Christian Unity accounts for the increased awareness even in this second volume of the Anchor Bible Commentary on John, especially in regard to the passion narratives.

Commission. This council worked both with other Christian denominations as well as the Jews. This is the entity that was directly responsible for *Nostra Aetate* (1965) during Vatican II. It is arguable that ecumenical work, even in the context of the Christian Church has the effect of making one generally more tolerant and sensitive to beliefs outside their own, thus influencing Brown's sensitivity to the Jews.

[258] Exceptions to this are P. Benoit, *The Passion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), E. Lohse, *History of the Suffering and Death of Jesus Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), Wayne A. Meeks, *The Prophet-King: Moses Traditions and the Johannine Christology* (SNT XIV; Leiden: Brill, 1967), P. Winter, "Josephus on Jesus," *Journal of Historical Studies* 1 (1968): 289–302. None of these address anti-Judaism in John in a way to account for Brown's subtle change. J. Louis Martyn's *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel* (1968) was not released in time to influence Brown's , *The Gospel According to John I–XII*. However, Brown did reference it in the introduction to this , *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, but only as further reading for the first half of the Gospel. While Martyn does deal with John 9, which contains some level of anti-Jewish hostility, he does not address potential anti-Judaism in a way that would seem more sensitive than Brown. We will discuss this book further when dealing with Brown's *Community of the Beloved Disciple.*

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF BROWN'S PUBLISHED WORKS ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN FROM 1971–1988

The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19 (1975)

In 1975, Raymond Brown published an article entitled "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19" in the journal *Worship.*[259] This article differs from his Anchor Bible Commentaries, first because it is specifically geared towards a church audience and not a scholarly one, and second because it is brief, consisting of only eight pages.[260] Brown states that his purpose in this article is not to restate in depth what he has already addressed in his earlier and more extensive works, but to "call attention to what is truly unique in the last of the passion narratives."[261] However, even in this limited space, Brown takes time to discuss the polemic against "the Jews."

In rapid treatment, Brown lays out the differences between the Johannine Passion and that of the other Gospels. He does this to emphasize the uniqueness of the Passion in John as well as highlight the literary aspects of the Gospel. He then clarifies his own perspective in a footnote by stating:

> Throughout this essay I assume the veracity of the position taken by the Roman Pontifical Biblical Commission in its 1964 Statement on the Historical Truth of the Gospels, namely, that the Gospels are the product of a development over a long period of time and so are *not* literal accounts of the words and deeds of

[259] Raymond E. Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," *Worship* 49, Number 3 (1975): 126–134.

[260] Brown refers his readers here to his second volume of his Anchor Bible Commentary on John for background information and detailed exegesis of individual passages dealing with the Passion in John.

[261] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 126, fn 2.

> Jesus, even though based on memories and traditions of such words and deeds. Apostolic faith and preaching has reshaped those memories…[262]

This is important for two reasons. First, we can see how careful Brown is to align his biblical interpretation with official Catholic doctrine. Second, once he has established that his starting point (i.e., that the Gospels are not literal accounts of the life of Jesus) is a legitimate Catholic position, he communicates to his Catholic readers that this position is also safe for them to adopt.

Throughout this article, Brown highlights the Evangelist's skill, at one point calling it "artistic."[263] Thus, he carefully communicates that this Gospel is as much a literary creation by its author,[264] as it is a historical retelling of the life of Jesus. An example of this is when Brown discusses the cries of the crowd to crucify Jesus. He states:

> In all the Gospels the cries to crucify Jesus represent a self-judgment on the part of the onlookers; but no other evangelist highlights the harshness of the cry so effectively as does the Fourth evangelist when he makes it a response to Pilate's *Ecce homo*…in the Johannine drama it has the effect on countless readers of making the rejection of Jesus an action literally inhumane. Moreover, since the Jesus who is rejected wears the mantle and crown of a king, this rejection combined with preference for Caesar, is portrayed as an abandonment by the Jews[265] of their messianic hopes.[266]

Brown skillfully makes his point by demonstrating to his reader how the Johannine Passion has been crafted to evoke certain reactions and emotions, even calling the Gospel a drama. These readers would be able to draw upon their own experience with the Gospel of John to confirm Brown's assertions. Furthermore, Brown has made this point in

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[262] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 127.

[263] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 129.

[264] Brown has already explained that the final version of the Gospel has been passed down and altered by multiple hands.

[265] This is the second time that the term "the Jews" has been used in this essay. The first was a reference to the king of the Jews. Neither time has the term been placed in quotation marks. However, in the next section Brown explains John's use of the Jews, and after that explanation will begin to place quotes around "the Jews."

[266] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 130.

conjunction with the negative portrayal of the Jews, illustrating how even the polemic against the Jews is part of the writer's craft. Note that when Brown describes the group crying for Jesus' crucifixion, he refers to them as "onlookers," instead of Jews, suggesting an increased awareness on his part. It is in the middle of his vivid portrayal of the Evangelist that Brown steps back from the Passion text and addresses the reader in first person for the purpose of addressing the Jews in John.[267] He states:

> Here I must beg the reader's indulgence for an aside. One cannot disguise a hostility toward "the Jews" in the Johannine passion narrative, neither by softening the translation to "Judeans" or "Judaists," nor by explaining that John often speaks of "the Jews" when the context implies that the authorities (i.e., the chief priests) alone were involved. By deliberately speaking of "the Jews" the fourth evangelist is spreading to the Synagogue of his own time the blame that an earlier tradition placed on the authorities.[268]

Recall that in 1960, Brown's official definition for "the Jews" is the Jerusalem authorities. In both 1966 and 1970, there are places that Brown describes "the Jews" as authorities. In this 1975 article, Brown renounces the simple formula that equates the "the Jews" in John with the authorities. However, Brown is not suggesting that in certain contexts "the Jews" does not imply authorities. What Brown is addressing is the attempt to lessen the Johannine hostility towards "the Jews" by suggesting that John did mean authorities, not Jews in general. Brown explains that the author's use of the term "the Jews" is a deliberate word choice, and his intent is to incriminate. He said something similar in 1966:

> By this term [the Jews] he [the Fourth Evangelist] indicates his belief that the Jews of his own time are the spiritual descendants of the Jewish authorities who were hostile to Jesus during the ministry. He regards the attitude of these authorities as the typical Jewish attitude he knows in his own time.[269]

While the two statements are very similar, Brown's 1966 statement seems to indicate a conflation of terms. The author of John was *thinking* of "the Jews" when writing the

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[267] Brown has not addressed his reader in the first person for this purpose in any of his earlier works.

[268] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 130.

[269] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII,* LXXII.

Gospel. In 1975, Brown's views are more direct. He implicates the Fourth Evangelist, not of transferring ideas and terms, but of a deliberate effort to pass the blame from the authorities during the time of Jesus to the Jews who continue to reject Jesus during his (the Evangelist's) own time. The difference between the two statements is intent. Brown is clear in his 1975 article that the intent of the author is hostile, while in 1966 Brown does not state as much.

Having addressed this hostility by the Fourth Evangelist, Brown moves on to contextualize it. He states:

> He and/or his confreres have suffered from Synagogue persecution. They have been driven out of the Synagogue for professing that Jesus is the Messiah (9:22, 12:42). The Fourth Gospel is written after an excommunication had been introduced into the *Shemoneh 'Esreh* (Eighteen Benedictions, *circa* A.D. 85) against deviants from Judaism, including the followers of Jesus—an excommunication that is still with us today; no matter how true and long one's Jewish lineage may be, one ceases to be a Jew when one confesses Jesus to be the Messiah. At the end of the first century expulsion from the Synagogue seemingly exposed Christians to Roman investigation and punishment, even death…[270]

Recounting a history where the Fourth Evangelist and his community have suffered from Synagogue persecution, Brown explains why the Fourth Evangelist harbors such hostility towards the Jews. The excommunication of the Johannine community from the Synagogue brought down upon them harsh consequences by Rome.

An interesting insertion is Brown's mention of the Messianic Jew. Brown uses this situation of the Messianic Jew as a modern parallel to help his reader understand an ancient situation and, arguably, to bring attention to the plight of the Messianic Jew. On the one hand, the potential danger here is that while highlighting the similarity between modern Messianic Jews and the Johannine community, he may have inadvertently linked the literary term "the Jews" in John (with all its negative connotations) to modern Jews. On the other hand, by highlighting the hostility between the Johannine community and the Synagogue of the 1st century, or even modern Messianic Jews and the hostility toward them from the modern synagogue, Brown has also been able to emphasize that real tensions exist for real reasons between intra-Jewish groups. By doing this, Brown

[270] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 131.

communicates that the Johannine community's negative sentiment towards "the Jews" existed in a narrow and specific context. Thus, while Messianic Jews and Johannine Jews/Christians may have reason to be hostile to their Synagogue neighbors, the average modern Christian does not.

Once Brown has established antagonism by Johannine community and the Jews towards each other, he states:

> This context of mutual hostility between the Johannine community and the Synagogue must be taken into account when reflecting on the Johannine passion narrative. Today Christians are embarrassed by such hostility (and some Jews have begun to question the wisdom of excommunicating believers in Jesus from the Synagogue). An initial response …is to omit the *anti-Jewish*[271] sections from the public reading of the passion narrative. In my opinion, a truer response is to continue to read the whole passion, not subjecting it to excisions that seem wise to us; but once having read it, then to preach forcefully that such a hostility between Christian and Jew cannot be continued today and is against our fundamental understanding of Christianity. Sooner or later Christian believers must wrestle with the limitations imposed on the Scriptures by the circumstances in which they were written. They must be brought to see that some attitudes found in the Scriptures, however explicable in the times in which they originated, may be wrong attitudes if repeated today… To excise dubious attitudes from the readings of Scripture is to perpetuate the fallacy that what one hears in the Bible is always to be imitated because it is "revealed" by God, the fallacy that every position taken by an author of Scripture is inerrant.[272]

Before discussing other issues regarding this passage, it is important to mark that this is the first place in Brown's writings on John that he actually uses the term "anti-Jewish" in reference to biblical passages.[273] In this publication, not only has Brown spoken out against any effort to whitewash John's use of "the Jews" by claiming he (John) really means the Jewish authorities, but Brown has now officially termed this hostility.

In this excerpt, Brown once again directly addresses his readers for the purpose of teaching them how to read the Gospel of John in light of its hostility to the Jews, thus displaying a heightened awareness to anti-Judaism. Brown has already communicated to

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[271] My emphasis.

[272] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 131.

[273] He has used anti-Semitic, for the purpose of discussing that the Gospel's polemic is not based on ethnicity and race, but up until this point, he has never used anti-Jewish.

this Catholic audience that it is within the realm of faithful Catholic exegesis to render the Gospel as not necessarily historical. Now he cautions them against two extremes: 1) removing offensive passages or 2) adopting the hostile attitudes in the text as if every attitude in the Bible is prescriptive. Brown stresses context at the beginning of this passage. For Brown, context will determine those aspects of scripture that are meant to be prescriptive. In a footnote, he refers to Vatican II stating:

> How much more cautious is Vatican II (Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* on Divine Revelation, no. II) in confining inerrancy: "The books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching firmly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted to put into sacred writings for the sake of our salvation."[274]

By drawing upon *Dei Verbum*, Brown is reasserting his views as solidly within the realm of Catholic thought, but he is also highlighting the flexibility of inerrancy within Catholicism. He has communicated to his readers that there is no place in Christianity for hostilities between Christians and Jews. To ensure that, he asserts that they must take responsibility for their own biblical interpretation, lest their interpretation lead them to adopt hostile attitudes. In his effort to combat anti-Jewish attitudes among his readers, Brown does not draw upon *Nostra Aetate*, the Vatican II document that specifically addresses hostilities against the Jews. It suggests that Brown sees the root issue of anti-Judaism as embedded in the biblical interpretation and literalist approaches to the Bible.

By explaining the *mutual* tension between the Johannine community and its Jewish counterparts, Brown is able to make an argument that gives a valid reason for the Johannine hostility and creates sympathy for this community's plight. He highlights the Fourth Gospel's rhetoric and suggests to the reader that, while inspired, the situation recounted in John's Gospel does not reflect the historical reality of the time of Jesus. The implication is that the reader cannot hold resentment against the enemies in the Gospel ("the Jews") because they are not his (the reader's) enemies and they may not have actually done what the Gospel suggests they have done to Jesus. Conversely, for those who would want to judge John's Gospel too harshly because of potentially anti-Jewish sentiment, Brown suggests by his historical reconstruction that the writer of the Gospel

[274] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 131, fn.4.

had understandable reasons for his sentiment. Brown leaves neither side blameless nor wholly culpable.

There are quite a few changes that occur in this publication. Brown actually reverses some of his earlier opinions. In 1960, he simply equated "the Jews" in John with the hostile Jerusalem authorities from the time of Jesus. In this 1975 article, Brown actually refutes his earlier position by stating that one cannot ignore the hostility in the Gospel of John by simply suggesting that "the Jews" mean religious authorities. In 1966, "the Jews" were still a historical group of people from the time of Jesus, but in 1975 Brown suggested that the term "the Jews" was vocabulary from the time of the author imported into the Gospel story. As in 1960, in 1966 it was the Jewish authorities that were the real, historical enemies of Jesus in the Gospel, but the Fourth Evangelist imported the term "the Jews" from his own time.

In 1975, Brown has focused more on the situation of the Johannine community than the time of Jesus, and he has moved from locating "the Jews" historically in the time of Jesus to locating them in the Evangelist's time decades later. They are imported back into the drama of the Gospel playing the *role* of those who are hostile to Jesus. Also new to this publication is that Brown goes so far as to suggest that the author of John has done this deliberately to spread blame to the Jews of his own time.

New to this work is the directness Brown displays in combating hostility towards "the Jews" among his readers. He even addresses the reader directly to attend to the hostile sentiment in the Gospel. However, Brown balances this with the historical reconstruction of the Johannine community and their persecution by Jews of the author's time.[275] In the end, even though Brown uses the term "anti-Jewish" for the first time here, he does not go so far as to accuse this Gospel of being anti-Jewish. Brown sees the hostility occurring, as going both ways between the Jewish believers in Jesus and the non-believing Jews. While in 1966, Brown saw the split between Christians and Jews as relatively established by the time of the Gospel of John's composition, here in 1975, by virtue of his comparison of the Johannine situation to the Messianic Jewish situation in modern times, Brown describes an intra-Jewish debate.

[275] He also briefly discusses the removal of the Jewish canopy of protection and persecution by Rome.

As in his 1960 work, Brown cites no sources; however, much has changed since his 1970 publication of the second half of his Anchor Bible Commentary on John's Gospel. In 1970, he left St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore and joined the faculty at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. This made Brown a colleague of J. Louis Martyn whose book, *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel*, was published in 1968. Martyn's book dealt with John 9, and specifically with the tensions between the Johannine community and "the Jews" as a focal point for understanding the Gospel as a whole. We will discuss Martyn's book in further depth when we discuss Brown's *Community of the Beloved Disciple.*

A conversation with Burton Visotzky, of Jewish Theological Seminary,[276] a former student and colleague of Brown's from Union Theological Seminary, revealed that from the time that Brown arrived at Union, he was not only Louis Martyn's colleague, but also his friend. Their constant conversations influenced both of them in such a way that a similarity of ideas is present in both their works; both were concerned with hostility towards the Jews being fostered by the biblical text.

Visotzky also informed me about the relationship between the faculty at Union Theological Seminary and Jewish Theological seminary, which is located directly across the street from Union. In 1970, the presence of a Catholic priest on staff at a Protestant seminary was already progressive in terms of ecumenical relations. The mingling, exchange of ideas, and community that occurred between the Jewish faculty at JTS and those at Union was an even more unique situation. Visotzky explained how during the 1970s and 1980s when Brown was at Union, the faculties at both Union and JTS went to each other's lectures, had evening seminars together, and shared kosher meals. Visotzky even said that after coming to Union, Brown did not publish anything on the Jews without allowing a Jewish scholar to screen it first. This environment accounts, in part, for Brown's growing sensitivity to potential anti-Judaism in 1975. However the next section will demonstrate how this also fits into the emerging Catholic strategies of how to combat anti-Jewish attitudes.

While it had been ten years since the conclusion of the Vatican II councils, this work is the first on John where Brown begins to freely quote from official Church

[276] Rabbi Burton Vistozky, interviewed by author, 11 August 2007, phone interview.

statements made during the councils. While he was a participant in the councils and not an outside observer, it is possible that it took years for these statements to be officially appropriated by the Catholic conscience. It makes sense that work geared towards a Catholic audience would explicitly draw upon Church statements, whereas the Anchor Bible Commentaries did not.

Probably one of the most influential factors since Brown's 1970 publication is the Statement released by the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews (hereafter CRR): *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (n. 4)*, which was promulgated in Rome on December 1, 1974. The Commission for Religious Relations had been formed on October 22 that same year by Pope Paul VI for the purpose of encouraging religious relations with the Jews. This commission falls under the authority of the Pontifical Commission for Promoting Christian Unity (hereafter PCPCU), formerly called the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity. Brown was appointed to the Vatican Secretariat for Christian Unity by Pope Paul VI in 1968, and served a five-year term, ending in 1973, only a year before this statement was released. His proximity to the formation of this document was close, yet how much direct influence he had upon it would be speculative as he was no longer on the PCPCU by the time of its release.[277]

The purpose of the statement was to provide instruction about how to implement the Vatican II statement on the Jews, *Nostra Aetate*, into every day life. In its introduction, this document states:

> We may simply restate here that the spiritual bonds and historical links binding the Church to Judaism condemn (as opposed to the very spirit of Christianity) all forms of anti-Semitism and discrimination, which in any case the dignity of the human person alone would suffice to condemn. Further still, these links and relationships render obligatory a better mutual understanding and renewed mutual esteem. On the practical level in particular, Christians must therefore strive to acquire a better knowledge of the basic components of the religious tradition of

[277] Also while the Commission for Religious Relations was under the PCPCU, how much influence the governing body had over specific documents is unclear. This is especially true here since the CRR was newly created just 2 months before the release of this document.

> Judaism; they must strive to learn by what essential traits the Jews define themselves in the light of their own religious experience.[278]

Repeating the dictate in *Nostra Aetate*, which states that all forms of anti-Semitism are against the spirit of Christianity, this document suggests that one solution for mutual understanding and esteem is for Christians to understand how the Jews define themselves in light of their own religious experience. According to Visotzky, this is something, by virtue of his relationships at JTS (discussions, meals, etc.) that Brown was already doing.

This statement moves on to prescribe specific behavior to implement *Nostra Aetate* in daily life. It continues:

> In addition to friendly talks, competent people will be encouraged to meet and to study together the many problems deriving from the fundamental convictions of Judaism and of Christianity. In order not to hurt (even involuntarily) those taking part, it will be vital to guarantee, not only tact, but a great openness of spirit and diffidence with respect to one's own prejudices.[279]

The atmosphere at Union and its proximity to JTS, made it possible for Brown to live out the above statements.

In regard to hostility towards the Jews in light of liturgical readings and biblical interpretation, this statement says:

> With respect to liturgical readings, care will be taken to see that homilies based on them will not distort their meaning, especially when it is a question of passages which seem to show the Jewish people as such in an unfavorable light. Efforts will be made so to instruct the Christian people that they will understand the true interpretation of all the texts and their meaning for the contemporary believer. Commissions entrusted with the task of liturgical translation will pay particular attention to the way in which they express those phrases and passages which Christians, if not well informed, might misunderstand because of prejudice. Obviously, one cannot alter the text of the Bible. The point is that, with a version destined for liturgical use, there should be an overriding preoccupation to bring

[278] Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (n. 4),* 31 January 1975.

[279] Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (n. 4),* 31 January 1975.

> out explicitly the meaning of a text, [1] while taking scriptural studies into account.[280]

This statement puts increased responsibility on those who teach the Bible to take extra caution when dealing with passages that contain unfavorable depictions of the Jews. The issue here is a concern that while hostile attitudes may be gleaned from these passages, it is the responsibility of "the authorities" in the church to ensure that this no longer occurs. Like Brown, this statement does not advocate altering the Bible itself (e.g., excising passages that seem hostile) but does support efforts to avoid transferring any hostility in the text to Christians of today.

It is clear that in Brown's 1975 essay, he takes this mandate seriously. Considering the timing of the release of this Catholic statement (it preceded Brown's article by only a few months), and the close proximity that Brown had to its formation by being part of the PCPCU less than a year before its release, it is likely that this document impacted Brown's opinion in this article. In addition, the very formation of the Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews demonstrates that in the years beyond Vatican II, those in leadership in the Catholic Church were becoming more sensitive to potential hostility towards the Jews both in its biblical interpretation and liturgical preaching, as well as in the sentiment of the people in the church. Clearly Brown was part of this movement toward increased sensitivity, both as one who was influenced and as a Catholic leader who influenced others.

The Community of The Beloved Disciple (1979)

In 1979, Raymond Brown published *The Community of the Beloved Disciple.*[281] It was his attempt to reconstruct the Johannine community. Considering the shift in focus from the historical time of Jesus to the sociological situation of the Johannine community evident in Brown's writings between his Anchor Bible Commentary in 1966 and the

[280] Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (n. 4),* January 31, 1975.

[281] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*, 6. Brown presented parts of this research with the presentation of two papers; one for the presidential address of the Society of Biblical Literature in December 1977, and one for the Schafer Lectures at Yale University, which he gave in February 1978.

essay on the Johannine passion in 1975,[282] this is not a surprising venture for him. Furthermore, contemporary with this work are other sociological studies on the Gospel of John, making this a general topic of interest in the late 1960s and 1970s. These works include *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (1968) by J. Louis Martyn (Brown's colleague at Union since 1971) and Wayne Meeks' article "Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism" (1972).

In Brown's reconstruction of this community, he states that he would "concentrate on relationships (of the Johannine community) to other groups and on a life situation that reflects both loves and hates…"[283] One of the other groups to which the Johannine community would exhibit "loves and hates" is "the Jews." The task that Brown undertakes in this project is to plot the various stages of the Johannine community. In agreement with Martyn, Brown believes that the original stages of the Johannine community began with Jews who came to Jesus and found him to be the Messiah they expected.[284] This is what makes the question of anti-Judaism in John so complicated. How can a community made up of Jews be anti-Jewish? Brown, however, does not see this first group of Jews as the only group of converts.

In John 4, a second group of converts are mentioned. Brown explains:

> The disciples of JBap from 1:35–51 constitute the main followers of Jesus until 4:4–42 when the large group of Samaritans are converted. This second group of believers is not converted by the first (4:38)… the acceptance of the second group by the majority of the first group is probably what brought upon the whole Johannine community the suspicion and hostility of the synagogue leaders.[285]

These Samaritans are another group who were personally converted by Jesus. Brown suggests that this second group, the Samaritans, were accepted and brought into

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[282] This shift was Brown's move to concentrate on the historical situation of the Johannine community rather than the historical situation of Jesus.

[283] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 7.

[284] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 27.

[285] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 37. In Brown's 1975 essay, he stated that using "authorities" in place of "the Jews" is not an honest handling of the hostility in the text. Yet using "Synagogue Leaders" in this context seems to have the same practical value as "authorities". It appears as though even in 1979 Brown had not reconciled this issue.

fellowship with the first group of Jews converted in chapter one.[286] According to Brown, it is this combined group consisting of both Jews and Samaritans that draws suspicion from the Synagogue leaders upon the whole Johannine community.[287]

To bolster his argument that it was the Samaritan association that triggered hostility by "the Jews" toward the Johannine community, Brown brings up 8:48 where "the Jews" accuse Jesus of being a Samaritan. He notes that in the Gospel of John, most of the tension with "the Jews" occurs after chapter 4 and the Samaritan conversion. Given the historical hostility between Jews and Samaritans, the prospect that these Samaritan converts could have caused their Jewish friends (also converts) to be rejected by "the Jews" is at least a possibility.[288]

Brown suggests that the anti-Jewish flavor of John could have been rooted in the Samaritan hostility towards the Jews. The slanderous usage of the term "Jew" that would seem very awkward coming from the mouth of a Jew against a fellow Jew, would not have the same strangeness coming from the lips of a Samaritan. Brown states:

> I have suggested that the presence of the new group (anti-Temple Jews and their Samaritan converts) would make the Johannine community suspect to the Jewish synagogue authorities.[289] It is fascinating to speculate whether the hostile Johannine style of speaking of "the Jews" may not have been borrowed from the Samaritans on whose lips (as non-Jews) it would have been quite natural. Most Gentile readers of today do not notice the strangeness of John's having Jesus and

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[286] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 35–37. Brown is a bit unclear in regard to the conversion of these Samaritans. On the one hand as demonstrated above, Brown says that they are converted by Jesus himself. On the other hand Brown notes in a couple of places that it is likely that historically Jesus did not convert many Samaritans (in Matthew, Jesus forbids the disciples to preach in Samaria, and in Luke, the Samaritans are hostile to Jesus). Similar to the tension with "the Jews," Brown suggests that appearance of Samaritan conversion in chapter 4 may reflect the post-resurrection history of the Christian movement.

[287] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 37.

[288] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 35–39. Brown's theory is actually a bit more complex. He believes that the second group of converts which entered the Johannine community would have included Samaritans, but also more Jews who were sympathetic to certain theological elements which were held by the Samaritans. These Jews would have had an anti-temple bias and perhaps a Christology not centered on a Davidic Messiah. This combined group of Jews and Samaritans with their different Christology, anti-temple sentiments, and of course the Samaritan element would have been especially odious to traditional Jews.

[289] Note once again, while Brown denounces the substitution of Jewish authorities for "the Jews" he himself is using "Jewish synagogue authorities."

> the Jews around him refer to other Jews simply as "the Jews" … What has happened in the Fourth Gospel is that the vocabulary of the evangelist's time has been read back in to the ministry of Jesus. The Johannine Christians were expelled from the synagogues (p.22 above) and told that they could no longer worship with other Jews; and so they no longer considered themselves Jews despite the fact that many were of Jewish ancestry.[290]

Thus, once again what Brown sees here is the vocabulary of the Evangelist's time (decades later) being written into the Gospel story set during the lifetime of Jesus. The group to which the Evangelist belongs has been heavily influenced by the Samaritans in his community and has also borne the brunt of hostility by "the Jews" who did not accept Jesus. As a result, the Evangelist has come to see "the Jews" as other. The issue here is religious, not ethnic.

Brown moves on to discuss the usage of "the Jews" in John. He says:

> In the evolution of the term it is helpful to note that John can refer interchangeably to "the Jews" and to the chief priests and Pharisees (compare 18:3 and 12; 8:13 and 22), and that John speaks of "the Jews" where the Synoptic Gospels speak of the Sanhedrin (compare John 18:28–31 with Mark 15:1). But this interchangeability is not to be interpreted benevolently as it is by those who wish to remove the term "the Jews" from the Fourth Gospel by substituting "Jewish authorities." John deliberately uses the same term for the Jewish authorities of Jesus' time and for the hostile inhabitants of the synagogue of his own time. During Jesus' lifetime the chief priests and some of the scribes in the Sanhedrin were hostile to Jesus and had a part in his death—I would judge that bedrock history. Those who have expelled the Johannine Christians and are putting them to death (16:2) are looked on as the heirs of the earlier group. Thus on the double level on which the Gospel is to be read, "the Jews" refers to both.[291]

This passage shows an evolution of Brown's thought. Brown's understanding regarding the term "the Jews" coming from the author's time period goes back to his 1966 publication. Brown's suggestion that it was the Fourth Evangelist's hostile intent to spread the blame from the Jews of Jesus' time to the Synagogue of his (the Evangelist's) own time goes back to 1975. And while the admonition against simplifying the Johannine use of "the Jews" to mean the Jewish/Jerusalem authorities also goes back to 1975, here

[290] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 40–41.

[291] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 41.

Brown has identified that practice as a strategy to lessen the hostility towards "the Jews." Brown moves on to address the import of this sentiment into the modern era by stating,

> It would be incredible for a twentieth-century Christian to share or justify the Johannine contention that "the Jews" are the children of the devil, an affirmation which is placed on the lips of Jesus (8:44).[292]

That being said, Brown is clear to stress again in this work that it does not benefit ecumenical relations to ignore and deny the negative sentiments towards the Jews.[293] He states:

> I cannot see how it helps contemporary Jewish-Christian relationships to disguise the fact that such an attitude once existed. And, unfortunately, one can surmise that the synagogue authorities who regarded themselves as the disciples of Moses and the Christians as "disciples of that fellow" (9:28–29) spoke no more gently than did the Johannine community.[294]

Without minimizing the harsh sentiments towards "the Jews," Brown does remind his reader that the hostility went both ways by suggesting that the "synagogue authorities" also spoke harshly. He suggested this in 1966 as well, however not in the didactic manner that he does here. In a very telling footnote to this section Brown states, "John's anti-Judaism is not the same as later anti-Semitism which has picked up ethnic, political, and economic coloring over the centuries."[295] This is the first time that Brown has described the hostility in the Gospel of John as anti-Judaism. It was in his 1975 article on the Passion that Brown first used the term "anti-Jewish," however he did not actually accuse the Gospel of John of anti-Judaism at that time. Here, however, he mentions John's anti-

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[292] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 42.

[293] Here Brown is addressing the suggestion that volatile passages be removed from the Gospel. Brown is opposed to altering the text for a couple of reasons. He does not believe that this solves the overall problem and instead sees it as the responsibility of preachers and community leaders to properly educate and stress that anti-Judaism is not an acceptable attitude today. Furthermore, Brown thinks that by eliminating offensive passages from the biblical text, it lulls passive readers into thinking that they can take the entire Bible at face value. Brown is opposed to this as he believes that common man should have to think critically about the Bible and realize that not every word is history, nor should certain attitudes contained in Scripture be emulated today. See Chapter 1 for more on this.

[294] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 42.

[295] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 42.

Judaism without definition or qualification as if it is an uncontested fact. This is a marked difference in Brown's formulation of the issue just in the four years since 1975.

An issue that Brown mentioned in passing in 1975,[296] but expounds upon here is the specific charge that "the Jews" were putting Johannine Christians to death. In his book *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel,* J. Louis Martyn suggested that some Synagogue authorities had in fact been putting believers in Jesus to death.[297] While Brown does not deny that this is a possibility, he suggests that the situation was not so explicit and that the charge leveled against "the Jews" in the Gospel of John[298] was more complex. Instead of putting Christians to death, Brown posits that excommunication from the Synagogue removed the Jewish canopy of protection from the believers in Jesus. As a result, "the Jews" exposed Christians to Roman persecution. The two scenarios are quite different as one scenario has the Jews putting people to death and the other has the Romans putting people to death. However, Brown thinks that the writer of John is referring to the latter, even though he ignores the Roman middleman when writing of the persecution resulting in the death of the Johannine Christians.[299]

In discussing the polemic against "the Jews" in John, Brown once again displays active sensitivity by addressing the potentially negative attitudes that the Gospel of John can foster towards Jews in modern times. He says:

> Perhaps once again it would not be out of order for me to include a short paragraph reflecting on the significance today of the Johannine attitude towards "the Jews"… In Johannine Christianity because of its peculiar history we see one of the most hostile relationships, and by the second century such extreme hostility became normal—a situation that has continued through the centuries. (Tragically, in those later centuries the situation of John 16:2 was reversed, and Christians put Jews to death thinking they were thus serving God.) We can only be grateful that in the mid-twentieth century, partly out of revulsion for the holocaust, the

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[296] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 131.

[297] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 42.

[298] John 16:2.

[299] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 42, 64.This is interesting regarding Crossan's criticisms later regarding Brown's inconsistency. Crossan (*Who Killed Jesus, x)* will accuse Brown of being "more" sure regarding the involvement of "the Jews" in the negative roles ascribed to them by the Gospels, but less sure about Roman involvement. However here Brown asserts Roman involvement in the persecution leading to death of the Johannine community rather than "the Jews."

> situation has changed; and a sincere effort at understanding is being made on both sides.[300]

Here, Brown uses stronger language than he has in the past. Never before has he used the phrase, "Christians put Jews to death." In the context of the Gospel of John, one is accustomed to reading that it was "the Jews" who put Jewish believers in Jesus—and Jesus himself—to death, not the other way around. Brown does not allow his audience to forget the centuries of persecution that Christians inflicted upon the Jews. Brown's address on the modern impact of Johannine hostility towards "the Jews" is weighty; it is the first time he has mentioned the Holocaust in conjunction with the hostility in the Fourth Gospel. This combined with "Christians putting Jews to death" has a sobering effect on the reader. He has demonstrated how the hostile attitudes of the minority can be devastating when the minority becomes the majority, and atrocities can be thought of as service to God.

In his 1975 article on the Passion, Brown briefly mentioned the Messianic Jewish situation as being related to the conflict between the Johannine Christians and "the Jews." Without the explicit mention of Messianic Jews, Brown addresses this issue again. He states:

> I have an uneasy feeling that the basic Johannine difficulty still faces us. To Jews disturbed by Christian attempts to convert them, the Christian question comes back, which may be phrased in the words of John 9:22: Why have they agreed that anyone who acknowledges Jesus as Messiah can no longer be part of the synagogue? Christians have ceded to that decision by converting Jews *away from*[301] the synagogue. Both parties, today as then, need to wrestle with the question of believing in Jesus and remaining a practicing Jew—a question that ultimately reflects upon the compatibility of Christianity and Judaism.[302]

After nearly 2000 years, Brown seems to suggest that Christianity and Judaism should reconsider their compatibility with one another. It seems that Brown sees in the modern situation regarding the Messianic Jews a way to redeem what went horribly wrong in the Johannine community's relationship with the synagogue.

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[300] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 69.

[301] Italics are Brown's.

[302] Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 69.

In 1966, Brown saw the term "the Jews" as an import from the era of the Johannine community. The Fourth Evangelist used the term "the Jews" as the enemies of Jesus in his Gospel because he saw the attitude of the enemies of Jesus as being similar to the Jews of his time who were hostile to his community. "The Jews" were the enemies of the Johannine community, decades after the historical time of Jesus. While Brown made statements that linked the author's use of "the Jews" to the Pharisees, chief priests, and authorities, he was never consistent. Thus, while Brown was clear that the author of John used "the Jews" as the antagonists to Jesus in the Gospel story, Brown never made a clear link between "the Jews" in John and real Jewish people during the time of Jesus. Also, the hostility that Brown described in 1966 was from the Jews to the Johannine community. He did not attribute similar hostility to that author of John.

In "The Passion According to John," (1975) Brown became more assertive in suggesting that the author of the Gospel had deliberate and hostile intent towards "the Jews" of his time because of the persecution he and his community were enduring at the hands of these Jews. This was a shift for Brown. The situation he described was mutual: those in the Johannine community became not just the objects of Jewish hostility, but they also harbored hostility towards the Jews who rejected Christ. In 1979 in *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*, Brown completes the thought started in 1975 and defines "the Jews" as being those opposed to Jesus during the time of his ministry *and* those persecuting the Johannine community decades later, "the hostile inhabitants of the Synagogue."[303] Thus, while occupying a *role* in the Gospel story, (similar to Bultmann's interpretation that "the Jews" were representatives of unbelief) "the Jews" were real, historical individuals both during the time of Jesus and during the time of the Johannine community, even though they would not have been called "Jews" during the time of Jesus' ministry.

Secondly, as a result of the community dynamics where the Jewish believers in Jesus felt alienated by "the Jews" and embraced Samaritan believers who already had anti-Jewish language in place, "the Jews" became a religious term of "otherness." This term was used to describe Jews who did not believe in Jesus. Since the term stressed

[303] Note, this is not just an authority group.

religion as opposed to ethnicity, ethnically Jewish believers in Jesus were able to use the term "the Jews" as a term of "otherness" for Jews who did not believe in Jesus. In this way, Brown has been able to account for the anti-Jewish sentiment expressed by an ethnically Jewish community. In addition, this work is the first where Brown accuses the Gospel of John of containing anti-Judaism.

Using the same rhetorical strategy he did in his 1975 article, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," where Brown addressed his reader in the first person to address potential anti-Jewish sentiment, in *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*, Brown is concerned enough about anti-Jewish sentiment to address this problem in a straightforward manner. It is arguable that this entire book is the attempt to answer the question of why there seems to be anti-Judaism in the Fourth Gospel. Addressing the hostility of the author, the sociological situation that accounts for that hostility, and parallel situations present in the modern age,[304] Brown clearly struggles with both the direct and the indirect issues associated with the hostility against "the Jews" in John. Far from his 1960 position of apparent unawareness of the issue of hostility towards "the Jews" embedded in the Fourth Gospel, in 1979 Brown is both aware, and active in educating his readers against adopting anti-Jewish attitudes from the Gospel of John. For the first time, in this work he attributes anti-Judaism to the Gospel of John, he links the hostility in the Gospel with attitudes related to the Holocaust, and he clearly states that over the centuries, Christians have killed Jews.

In the four years since his 1975 publication, Brown served as the president of the Society for Biblical Literature (1976–77) and remained as the only American Catholic member of the Faith and Order Commission.[305] He also served as a visiting professor at the Albright School of Archaeology in Jerusalem in 1978.[306] While all these things testify to Brown's growing capacity as both a leader in biblical studies as well as in the Catholic

[304] Brown sees the Messianic Jewish controversy in modern Synagogues as being similar to the strife in the Johannine community.

[305] Witherup, "Biography of Raymond E. Brown, S.S.," 256–57. He began serving on this commission in 1968, the same year he was appointed to the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity on which he served a five-year term.

[306] Witherup, "Biography of Raymond E. Brown, S.S.," 256–57.

Church, an obviously important influence on this work was J. Louis Martyn's book, *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel.* John Ashton, in his book *Understanding the Fourth Gospel,* says about Martyn's work, "For all its brevity is probably the most important single work on the Gospel since Bultmann's commentary."[307] This publication and Brown's close relationship with Martyn left a distinct mark on Brown's work.

J. Louis Martyn and *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel*

By the time *Community of the Beloved Disciple* was published, Brown had served on the same faculty as Martyn for eight years at Union Theological Seminary. Brown had already posited his own theories about the influence of the Johannine community situation upon the Fourth Gospel (especially in regard to John's use of "the Jews") as far back as 1966, before the publication of Martyn's book. After moving to Union, however, Brown began to work on his own reconstruction of the Johannine community. This marked an official shift of understanding for Brown. From this point on, Brown's approach to the Gospel of John was clear: to understand the Fourth Gospel, Brown would look to the historical time of the Johannine community rather than to the ministry of Jesus. While this was not new for Brown, it was not until *Community of the Beloved Disciple* that he defined this approach of looking at the Gospel of John. Everything after this work looks to the Johannine community as a starting point for understanding the Gospel as a whole rather than looking to the Johannine community to explain specific references made by the Gospel. Also, while Brown had already shown preference for an interpretation of John that had more connections with Judaism (more like Dodd) than Greco-Roman ideas (Bultmann), Martyn's work solidly rooted the Gospel in the landscape of first-century Judaism and the complex workings of intra-Jewish strife. In addition, contrary to Bultmann, Martyn defined the Johannine community's self-identification as Jewish and not Christian.[308] All of this was already compatible with

[307] Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel,* 107.

[308] D. Moody Smith, "The Contribution of J. Louis Martyn to the Understanding of the Gospel of John," in J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 6.

Brown's previous interpretive inclinations. In his article, "The Contribution of J. Louis Martyn to the Understanding of the Gospel of John," D. Moody Smith summarizes the uniqueness of Martyn's approach to the Gospel of John. He states:

> Suffice it to say that Martyn, unlike the dominant interpreters antecedent to him, took seriously the tension and hostility between "the Jews" and Jesus as the key to the historical life-setting and the purpose of the Gospel of John. His entire proposal is based on two fundamental assumptions or insights. First, the prominence of the Jews and their hostility to Jesus and his disciples likely represents a genuine historical setting (that is not an exercise in theological symbolism). Second, this historical setting can scarcely be that of Jesus and his actual, original disciples and opponents…Martyn is actually invoking the modern, form–critical principle that the Gospels bear testimony primarily to the life-setting in which they were produced, and only secondarily to their subject matter.[309]

The perspective that deems the tension between the "Jews" and Jesus as central to understanding the historical life setting and purpose to the Fourth Gospel is something that we have seen growing in Brown's work since 1970. There are strong hints to this thinking in his 1975 essay and—whether because of its brevity, or because Brown was still developing his own opinions at that time—there it was not fully expressed. In *Community of the Beloved Disciple,* we can see the influence of Martyn's work in *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel* fully integrated into Brown's own theories.

Brown himself clearly points out his agreement with Martyn on many points. Among these are the priority of the Johannine community for understanding the Gospel and the importance of the tension with "the Jews." His disagreements with Martyn center on the dating of specific stages of the formation of the Gospel and the Johannine community.[310] Another major point of disagreement with Martyn is the interpretation of the excommunication from the Synagogue and persecution to death of the Johannine community (John 16:2). Recall that Brown suggests that it was not a Jewish authority that actually put people to death, but Rome that put to death the excommunicated Jews who

[309] Smith, "The Contribution of J. Louis Martyn to the Understanding of the Gospel of John," 6.

[310] Brown, *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, 174. Another point on which the two seem to disagree is in their confidence regarding the Birkat Ha-minim. Martyn seems quite confident that this was the method used by the Synagogue to discover closet Christians hiding in their midst. while Brown uses quite a bit of qualifying language (may, might, possibly) as he discusses the possible use of a benediction against the heretics. See Brown, *Community of the Beloved Disciple,* 22, and Martyn, *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel,* 59–66.

no longer fell under the canopy of Jewish protection (which would grant them exemption from participating in Roman worship). Martyn disagreed. He had strong opinions that it was, in fact, a Jewish authority that put the Johannine Jewish-Christians to death. Martyn states:

> In light of the fact that the horrible and heinous and centuries-long persecution of Jews by Christians has sometimes been "justified" by the theory that the Jews did the first persecuting, it is understandable that a number of Christian interpreters have wished to see this verse as a reference to the persecution of Christians not by Jews, but by Roman authorities…Modern relations between Christians and Jews are not helped by an antihistorical intepretation of Biblical texts.[311]

This opinion was published in 1979. Considering their constant dialogue, it is likely a direct reaction to Brown who holds the very opinion that Martyn renounces, thus demonstrating a lively interaction between the two.[312]

Another major difference between the two is that Martyn focused mainly on one stage of the Johannine community. This was the middle stage where tensions with the Jews were high, but the Johannine community was still in the process of "leaving" the Synagogue; in other words, "the Jews" and the Johannine community were not quite separate entities yet. On a technical level Smith explains that, "Martyn was concerned with Fortna's Gospel of Signs, and the controversy that led to the expansion of the Gospel into what we now know."[313] Brown's community scenario was far more developed, involving explanations of both the role of the Beloved Disciple and the Samaritan presence in the community.

While differences are present, the agreements seem to outweigh the disagreements. There is no question of the influence of Martyn on Brown's work. The influence, however, was most likely mutual, as is evidenced by the sentiments above by Martyn that are arguably directed in part to Brown. At this time in Brown's career, his various appointments to professorships and leadership roles confirm the weight of his

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[311] Martyn, *Gospel of John in Christian History,* 56. Biblical versus biblical is Martyn's use here.

[312] Even though *Community of the Beloved Disciple* was published too late for Martyn's to have reacted in print to it by 1979, their interaction as colleagues could account for this.

[313] Smith, "The Contribution of J. Louis Martyn to the Understanding of the Fourth Gospel," 13.

influence in the field of biblical studies. It is clear, however, that his experience at Union, specifically his close relationship with Louis Martyn, as well as his continued interaction with those at JTS affected Brown's perception of "the Jews" in John and, as a result, the entire enterprise of biblical interpretation.

The Gospel and the Epistles of John (1988)

Brown's *The Gospel and the Epistles of John* published in 1988 is a reprint of his first book on the Gospel of John published in 1960[314] entitled *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles*. In its first publication, it was a short work (102 pages), and the reprint is not much longer. However, its 136 pages do give us information for evaluating Raymond Brown's 1988 position regarding the function of "the Jews" and potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John. The real value of this book for this project is that since it is an updated and revised version of his 1960 publication, it is possible to track changes very closely since any alterations made by Brown are specific and deliberate.

Of primary note in this publication is that the term "the Jews" is now in quotation marks. While this is not new for Brown (he doing this as early as 1966), it is a conscious update from the 1960 version of this same commentary and is a universal change throughout the entire book.

In 1960 the introduction in this book was very short, spanning only a few pages. The same is true here in 1988. However, in this limited space, Brown has been able to update and address relevant issues that have changed in the previous 28 years due to continuing research in the field. In 1960 Brown did not address "the Jews," potential anti-Judaism, or community strife. Here in 1988, however, things have changed, and he does bring some of these issues into the introductory material.

In this revised edition, Brown discusses tensions between Jews and Christians in a section entitled "Familiarity with Judaica." There is almost nothing he says here that is "new," especially in light of *Community of the Beloved Disciple*. However, this is a clear change from Brown's 1960 version of this same publication. He explains:

[314] Raymond E. Brown. *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles*. New Testament Reading Guide 13 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1960).

> Christians have been expelled from the synagogue (9:22)—such a Jewish policy against the *mînîm* or sectarians seems to have begun in the mid-80s and to have become more widely effective in the early 100s. Indeed, Christians have been killed by pious devotees of the synagogue (16:2).[315] Consequently "the Jews" are a separate group from Christians, intensely disliked; and Jesus at times speaks as a non-Jew: "Written in *your* Law" (10:34); "In their Law" (15:25); "As I said to the Jews" (13:33)… He is hailed as God (20:28); and the basic argument with "the Jews" is not merely about his violation of the Sabbath rules but about his making himself equal to God (5:1618).[316]

Brown skillfully summarizes the major issues regarding background to the community situation, the relationship with "the Jews," and the reasons for conflict in one paragraph of the introduction. While terse, it introduces his reader to the basic issues and sets the stage for the rest of the Gospel. In fact, it is actually the first full page of Brown's writing. Consistent with his views in *Community* and the influence of Louis Martyn, here in 1988 Brown sees this information regarding "the Jews" as vital to understanding the Gospel as a whole.

In his 1960 commentary on the prologue, Brown stated "The first half of the Gospel shows us the rejection of Christ by the darkness (evil forces) and the Jews."[317] With the exception of "the Jews" now being in quotation marks, Brown has changed nothing; it reads the same way that it did in 1960. Later in this same section in 1960 Brown stated:

> Just as a new creation replaces the old, a new covenant replaces the old covenant with Israel on Sinai, because the Chosen People rejected Christ.[318]

Here however, in 1988, he has re-worded this to sound less inflammatory and include a bit more ambiguity. His revised version states:

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[315] This is interesting in light of *Community of the Beloved Disciple* where Brown states that he did not think that synagogue Jews actually killed the Christians, but that they placed them on the radar for Roman persecution by excommunicating them from the synagogue. Considering the depth of explanation he gives in *Community,* it is likely that that his perspective has not changed since then, but space perhaps was not permitting for him to go into extensive detail.

[316] Brown. *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 10.

[317] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 16.

[318] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles*, 17.

> Just as a new creation replaces the old, a new covenant replaces the old covenant with Israel on Sinai, *because the people who originally were his own rejected Jesus.*[319]

While these two statements are arguably congruent, the latter suggests that those who rejected Jesus were not rejecting the "Christ," in fact their contention was the Jesus was not the Christ.

Similar to 1960 (as the format of the publication remains the same), it is only when Brown discusses the conflict between John the Baptist and "the Jews" that we find out how he defines this group. In discussing John 1:19 where "'the Jews' sent to him from Jerusalem priests and Levites…," Brown notes both in 1960 and 1988 that "in the Synoptics, Jesus is in conflict with 'the Jewish authorities.' In John, 'the Jews' are in direct attack from the very beginning."[320] In parentheses in 1960, Brown noted, "In John, this term (the Jews) means the hostile Jerusalem authorities."[321] In 1988, however, Brown uses the same parentheses for the updated explanation where instead of "the Jews" being the hostile Jewish authorities, they are now "those of Jewish birth who reject Jesus."[322]

Interestingly enough, while Brown updates some crucial areas, there are other similar areas he neglects. For example, in 1960 Brown states just a few lines later that "the whole of John is a trial of Christ by the *leaders of his people*." Brown will refer to these same people just further on as "the guardians of the national religion."[323] He does not update these sentences in 1988 to reflect his updated definition that says "the Jews" are more than just leadership, but all Jews who reject Jesus.[324] Thus there is some inconsistency. What really seems to have changed here is that by broadening his

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[319] Brown. *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 23.

[320] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 19 and Brown, *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 24.

[321] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 18. Again on page 25 when discussing the Jesus cleansing the temple in John 2, Brown will substitute without explanation "temple authorities" for the Jews. He will do this again in 5:16–18, where instead of "the Jews" Brown uses "authorities."

[322] Brown. *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 24.

[323] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 18.

[324] Brown. *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 24.

definition of "the Jews," Brown has been able to account for later passages in John that seem to implicate the people as well as the elite religious authorities.[325] While in the earlier chapters of John, the term "the Jews" could represent the religious authorities, in the latter chapters of John, this narrow definition is inadequate. Brown has prepared for this by changing his overall definition.

There are other places that suggest insensitivity on Brown's part from 1960 that have not been updated in 1988.[326] Recall that when discussing John 7:35, the Gospel reads, "The Jews therefore said among themselves, 'Where is he going that we shall not find him?'" As Brown commented on this passage in 1960, he called their response a "sneering Jewish retort."[327] This remains the same in 1988. In dealing with the passage in John 8:44, where Jesus calls "the Jews" children of the devil, Brown's 1960 commentary did nothing to qualify, explain, downplay or own up to the severity of this passage. Instead, his commentary stated:

> When they [the Jews] *retort* that they have come from God, Jesus denies it. He should know for he has come from God. Rather they are of the devil, who lied in the Garden of Eden and brought death into the world through sin; and they are liars like their father. That is why they cannot recognize the truth.[328]

This also has not been revised in 1988.[329] When dealing with Pilate in John 18:38 where Pilate asks, "What is truth?" In 1960 Brown explained that, "Pilate's question is an example of misunderstanding, not cynicism."[330] In 1988, Brown has omitted this statement and instead states:

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[325] While there are some passages like 1:19, 2:20, and 5:18 where the term "the Jews" is easily exchangeable with "Jewish authorities," there are other passages like 10:31 and 10:39 where a mass group of Jews is implied and thus "Jewish authorities" does not seem to work for all uses of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι in John.

[326] Again, this may be an issue of simplicity. However, this is an area where we can measure Brown's sensitivity. While he has changed certain potentially offensive and insensitive aspects of this commentary, he has not done a complete reworking.

[327] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 45. Brown will make this same statement again when dealing with John 9:40 on page 53.

[328] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 49.

[329] Brown. *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 54.

[330] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 87.

> The purpose of the incarnation is better understood in terms of testifying to the truth—a testimony that constitutes judgment for Pilate who seeks to avoid it.[331]

This is noteworthy because the 1960 version portrays Pilate not as guilty of wrongdoing but of misunderstanding. Brown has chosen to remove the statement that suggests Pilate deserves the benefit of the doubt, and instead he states that Pilate too judges himself by not deciding for Jesus. This is a more even treatment of Jews and Pilate in the Fourth Gospel than Brown's 1960 version, which seemed to attribute guilt to "the Jews" but not to Pilate.

Finally, in Brown's handling of 19:14–15, Pilate presents the scourged Jesus to "the Jews." Their response is to say "Crucify Him." The Gospel itself presents this as a quote coming from "the Jews." However in both 1960 and 1988, Brown makes reference to these Jews as "the people."[332] In 1960 Brown wrote, "The meaning of the trial is now clear; the presence of Jesus has provoked judgment whereby the Chosen People have abandoned their birthright."[333] This is not a particular group of Jews, but the entire people. According to Brown, they now have given up their rights as the chosen people. While this phrase is something that was original to the 1960 version that perhaps Brown found easier to leave in the 1988 version, the fact that he did not excise this when he has taken the trouble to modify other areas of the commentary could make him seem insensitive to potential anti-Judaism were this work not placed in the context of his other publications.

In summary, it is clear that in 1960, while undertaking his first publication on John, Brown was not concerned with anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John. In this 1988 version, his awareness has increased. He has revised not only his definition of who "the Jews" are, but he has made slight alterations throughout the commentary which indicate he is concerned about the overall portrayal of "the Jews" in this text.

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[331] Brown. *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 91.

[332] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89 and Brown, *The Gospel and Epistles of John*, 93.

[333] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 89. The context of this later statement is after "the Jews" have affirmed that they have no king but Caesar.

While there are some places that modifications perhaps could have been made and were not, there are possible explanations for why this did not occur. First, the 1988 version of this text is simply a revision. Brown has updated and modified certain data and certain positions. However, he has not attempted to reword and restructure the entire commentary. As a result, there is much that perhaps a more complete revision would have changed.

In 1960, Brown defined "the Jews" as the "Jerusalem authorities," who were zealous for their national religion. Towards the end of his treatment even in 1960, Brown made the equation between "the Jews" and the people. This is probably because even after having made an official definition, his definition did not adequately address the uses of "the Jews" in the latter chapters of John, which seem to refer to a larger group than to an elite group of authorities. In the end, while Brown's official definition of "the Jews" in the 1960 version of this publication is that they are to be equated with the Jerusalem authorities, what he actually described are those Jews who were in opposition to Jesus. According to Brown, early in the Gospel this was a narrow group, but by the time he discussed the Passion, "the Jews" were the populace.

In 1988, Brown states early on that "the Jews" are "those of Jewish birth who do not believe in Jesus." Rather than beginning with a small group and later expanding out to implicate the greater populace, in 1988 Brown defines "the Jews" more widely from the beginning, making his overall definition of "the Jews" adequate for the entire Gospel. In the publications between 1960 and 1988, especially *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, Brown explained that the author of John was thinking of Jews during his/her time when using the term "the Jews" in the Gospel story set during the time of Jesus. In the story, "the Jews" play the role of the antagonists. Historically, they represent those hostile to Jesus during his ministry, and the Evangelist has deliberately used the term to spread blame to "the Jews" of his time as well. Brown does not update this information in this 1988 revised work.

By the time this revised work was published, nine years had transpired since *Community of the Beloved Disciple.* Brown had served as president of the Society for the Study of the New Testament (1986–87) and received the Catholic Press Association

Book Award for *Antioch and Rome* (1984).[334] In addition, Brown remained on the Faith and Order Commission, which released its statement *Ecumenical Considerations on Jewish-Christian Dialogue* on July 16, 1982.[335] He was still a member of the faculty at Union Theological Seminary.

[334] Witherup, "Biography of Raymond E. Brown, S. S.," 256–257.

[335] This statement addressed many of the same things that *Guidelines and Suggestions for Implementing the Conciliar Declaration Nostra Aetate (No. 4)* had stated. It suggested that Christians should interact with Jews, allow Jews to communicate their own expression of religious identity, and it condemned Jewish persecution. As Brown was on this commission, it may be that Brown's experience with *Guidelines* had some impact on the final formation of this document.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF BROWN'S WORKS ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN FROM 1988–1998

Death of the Messiah (1994)

Death of the Messiah is an unmatched work in the field of New Testament studies. Its two volumes contain a wealth of information on the Passion narratives of all four Gospels as well as other extant literature that relates to the Gospel passion accounts. As the Gospels come to their close and Jesus is crucified, the narrative becomes increasingly hostile towards "the Jews" and there is potential for this hostility to be passed down to the reader.[336] Because of this, Brown addresses potential anti-Judaism in multiple places in this work and even devotes a specific section to deal with the responsibility and guilt for the death of Jesus. While Brown addresses all four Gospels, we will focus our attention on Brown's perspective on "the Jews" in John.

Early on in *Death of the Messiah*, Brown addresses the individual perspectives that are present in each of the four Gospels.[337] In assessing John's passion narrative, Brown notes that:

> Perhaps more insistently than for any other Gospel, one must interpret the theology of John's Passion Narrative in relation to preceding episodes of hostility earlier in the Gospel towards Jesus. The Jerusalem authorities have tried to seize or kill Jesus several times.[338]

[336] Although ironically, much of what is considered potentially anti-Jewish in John is found before the passion narrative.

[337] Brown. *Death of the Messiah*, 25–35.

[338] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 33.

Brown's point is that hostility towards "the Jews" is a theme that runs throughout the Fourth Gospel and not something that culminates in the Passion. For those of us familiar with Brown's earlier works on John, this is nothing new for us; he has demonstrated this hostility to some degree in every work since 1966.

Brown's use of "Jerusalem authorities" above is noteworthy considering his earlier works and how his evaluation of the term "the Jews" has vacillated over time. Just a few paragraphs later, Brown will refer to those outside the praetorium pressuring Pilate for Jesus' death in John 19 as "the Jews." Based on Brown's analysis in past publications and his expressed conclusions that "the Jews" cannot simply mean the Jerusalem authorities, it is unlikely that this is an unconscious slip on his part. In general the term "the Jews" accounts for a larger group of people than simply authorities. Recall that in his 1988 publication, *The Gospel and the Epistles of John*, "the Jews" are those of Jewish birth who do not believe in Jesus, including the general populace that appear in the Passion. By continuing to use "Jerusalem authorities" when the Gospel says "the Jews" in the earlier chapters of John, Brown may not be conflating terms as it appears, but making a specific interpretation based on context. Thus, what Brown is really saying is that when the Gospel speaks of "the Jews" in the earlier part of the Gospel, they are not just Jews who do not believe in Jesus, but a specific subgroup (authorities) that are part of the larger group of "Jews." Brown addresses the author's intent by saying, "John makes no distinction between the hostility of the authorities and that of 'the Jews' and has all of them willing to deny their messianic hopes rather than accept Jesus (19:15)."[339] Suggesting that John groups the authorities with "the Jews" in their shared hostility towards Jesus indicates that Brown does not interchange these terms by accident, but has made conscious interpretive decisions when he uses authorities to describe the Gospel's earlier uses of "the Jews."[340]

[339] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 91.

[340] Brown interpreted the Gospel in this way even in 1960, 34 years before this work. However, his only explanation for who John's Jews are in 1960 was that they are the Jerusalem Authorities. Recall that when dealing with the crowds crying for Jesus to be crucified in the Passion, Brown at that time referred to "the Jews" as the people. In 1960, Brown did not have the discussion regarding John's use of the Jews to inform us that he was sensitive to the different possible uses of the term. Here, however, he demonstrated a complex understanding of the different uses of "the Jews," and therefore we can assume that he does not mix terms accidentally.

Still in the introductory material (almost 400 pages into this text), Brown includes a section called "Responsibility and/or Guilt for the Death of Jesus." Having established his opinion that with the combined evidence coming from Jewish, Christian, and Pagan sources, the involvement of the Jews in Jesus' death approaches certainty,[341] he rapidly moves to the core issue: blame and resentment towards the Jews. As the following passages display, this entire section reveals a heightened sensitivity on Brown's part. He states:

> Reading the Gospels will convince most that at the least, although troublesome, Jesus was a sincere religious figure who taught truth and helped many, and therefore crucifying him was a great injustice. Believers in the divinity of Jesus will have a magnified sense of injustice, which at times has been vocalized as deicide. Since by their very nature the Gospels are meant to persuade (evangelize), the PNs[342] will arouse resentment toward the perpetrators of the injustice. [343]

Brown writes that as Rome no longer exists in the same capacity that it did during the time of Jesus, anti-Roman sentiment is not really a concern. The situation for the Jews is different. He explains:

> Unto this day, however, the Jews as a people and Judaism as a religion have survived; and so the observation that factually Jewish authorities (and some of the Jerusalem crowds) had a role in the execution of Jesus—an execution that Christians and many nonChristians regard as unjust—has had an enduring effect.[344]

Brown demonstrates how certain statements and events have been used to perpetuate blame upon Jews generations beyond those who were actually involved in the Crucifixion. He states:

> Very early the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70 by the Romans was seen as divine retribution for what the Jews had done to Jesus. Beyond that event, Matt 27:25 where "all the people" accept legal responsibility for the execution of

[341] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 382.

[342] Passion Narratives.

[343] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 383–384.

[344] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 384.

> Jesus ("His blood on us and our children") has been interpreted to mean that Jews of later generations and even of all time are guilty and should be punished.[345]

Brown goes on to explain how Christian theologians from Origen to Luther have advocated the right and duty of Christians to hate and punish the Jews.[346] Condemning this line of thinking, Brown draws upon *Nostra Aetate*[347] to show what proper modern attitudes of Christians towards Jews should look like. He says:

> Thinking Christians have come belatedly to recognize that an underlying hostile attitude towards Jews because of the crucifixion is religiously unjustified and morally reprehensible. An indication of this realization found solemn expression at the Second Vatican Council: "What happened in Christ's passion cannot be blamed without distinction upon all Jews then living nor upon the Jews of today. Although the Church is the new people of God, the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God, as if such views followed from the Holy Scriptures."[348]

It is noteworthy that while *Nostra Aetate* was published in 1964 and Brown was actually present at the Vatican II councils where this document was formed, this is the first time among the publications evaluated in the project that he has mentioned *Nostra Aetate*.

Brown continues, listing how various people have attempted to prevent the recurrent hatred of the Jews over the crucifixion. He explains:

> The most common effort is to insist that Jesus died for all or for sins, and thus it is irrelevant to speak of Jewish responsibility or guilt. Although such a salvific evaluation of the death of Jesus is good Christian theology, it really does not deal with the historical situation…Another path has been to deny that there was any Jewish participation in the crucifixion… historical evidence does not warrant this thesis.[349]

This passage is very important in understanding Brown's own perceptions of efforts to combat anti-Judaism. What he has described are different strategies that Christians have

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[345] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 384.

[346] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 385.

[347] Pope Paul VI, *Nostra Aetate* (Oct. 28, 1965), 4.

[348] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 385.

[349] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 386.

employed to navigate around anti-Jewish attitudes. The first strategy attempts to nullify the effects of Jewish involvement in the crucifixion; the second strategy suggests that historically there was no involvement. Brown rejects both these strategies, the first because even if Jesus' death does absolve "the Jews" of guilt, the result is an affirmation that "the Jews" carry guilt over the crucifixion, thus not changing the situation. He rejects the second because he does not see the denial of Jewish involvement in the crucifixion a feasible historical possibility. Brown's solution is to:

> Discuss the ways (some of them strongly antiJewish) in which the Gospels have described the Jewish role in the death of Jesus, and then to offer some observations that may help readers to deal constructively with that role.[350]

As Brown proceeds to do this in the next section, he gives something of a disclaimer. He states:

> Frankly, some have advised me against devoting even these few pages to the issue. They have warned me that whatever I write will be dismissed as Christian self-justification or as inadequate…I know that what I write below is inadequate. Given the history of anti-Semitism in the 20th cent., even whole books devoted to two millennia of antiJewish attitudes derived from the PNs are inadequate.[351]

Acknowledging the inadequacy of any succinct treatment on anti-Judaism that he would include in this book, Brown explains why he thinks it is nonetheless important.

> Since I am a Christian commentator, readers are likely to trust my affirmation that I am sincerely interested in the spiritual implications of the passion and its import for the theology of redemption… NonChristians need more tangible evidence that a Christian commentator is aware and concerned about the harmful way in which the PNs have been misused against the Jews; and Christian readers need to be forcefully reminded of hostile elements in their own reading of the PNs. As for Christian self-justification, these remarks are aimed only at intelligibility. I would not dare to justify or condemn the attitudes either of 1st-cent. Christians or of their opponents, about whose motives and consciences we are ill informed. However, if we can more clearly perceive and understand those 1st cent. attitudes, we may be able to judge our own attitudes and self-justifications.[352]

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[350] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 386.

[351] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 386.

[352] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 386.

These statements are insightful, allowing us to see Brown's complex awareness of anti-Judaism in the Passions of the Gospels. Brown will not use strategies to avoid anti-Judaism. He will neither vindicate nor vilify either the Jewish-Christians who directed hostility towards the Jews through the Passion narratives or the Jews who are recorded as having persecuted Jesus and his followers. Brown has made it clear that his aim is not to judge attitudes, but to learn from the historical attitudes in order to learn more about modern attitudes. It is for this reason that accurate historical interpretation of even the hostility in the Gospels is so important to him.

Still in the introductory material, Brown conducts a quick overview of the potential anti-Judaism in each individual Gospel by evaluating how "the Jews" or Jewish leaders are portrayed in each Gospel.[353] Brown reminds us that the Passion of John does not actually increase its level of hostility towards the Jews because this hostility began much earlier by stating:

> Struggle with the Jerusalem authorities, synagogue authorities, and simply "the Jews" marks the whole Gospel of John, so that the antiJewish picture in the PN does not change or startlingly magnify the hostility that Jesus has hitherto encountered and provoked.[354]

While the entirety of John's Gospel displays hostility towards "the Jews," it is when Jesus is before Pilate in 18:28–32 that the hostility culminates in the Johannine passion. Brown demonstrates how in order to obtain Jesus' death, the chief priests deny the messianic hopes of their of their people by saying, "We have no king but Caesar" (19:15); they try to get Pilate to change the title on the cross that proclaims Jesus to be "the King of the Jews;" and they request that Jesus' legs be broken.[355] His interpretation here in 1994 is noteworthy, however, because he sees the Gospel as being just as unforgiving to Pilate as to "the Jews." He states:

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[353] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 386. Here Brown once again reminds us how the chief priests and the Pharisees had been plotting since chapter 11 to have Jesus killed, thus offering evidence that the hostility towards the Jews in the passion of John does not increase in proportion to the rest of the Gospel. See this section (386–391) for detailed information on how Brown evaluates the Passions of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

[354] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 390.

[355] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 391.

> Pilate's statements that he finds no case against Jesus are not meant to exculpate the Romans. Quite the contrary, the Johannine Pilate is meant to typify the person who tries to avoid deciding between truth and falsehood and who, in failing to decide for truth, in effect decides for falsehood. This Roman is not "of the truth," for he fails to hear the voice of Jesus.[356]

Later in *Death of the Messiah* when Brown evaluates each passage in commentary style, Brown will reiterate this sentiment. With "the Jews" outside the praetorium and Jesus inside Brown explains:

> These are the forces of darkness and light. Pilate must shuttle back and forth, for he is the person-in-between who does not wish to make a decision and so vainly tries to reconcile the opposing forces. For John, however, one must decide for light or darkness and thus judge oneself as one faces the light come into the world (3:19–21). By not deciding for the truth, Pilate is deciding for falsehood and darkness.[357]

Thus, in Brown's interpretation of John, Pilate does not fare any better than "the Jews" who are outside calling for Jesus' death. This attitude concerning Pilate reflects change. Recall that in 1960, Brown was sympathetic towards Pilate, suggesting that Pilate was not guilty of cynicism but misunderstanding.[358] In 1970, Brown acknowledged that there was a battle over Pilate's soul, but seemed to think of Pilate as "caught" in the middle. Here, Brown makes no excuses for Pilate. Pilate has failed to choose the truth and therefore has chosen falsehood and darkness and thus is equal in complicity to "the Jews."[359]

Brown notes that in 18:28b, the "they" who will not enter the praetorium are the high priests and the Jewish attendants.[360] However, in 18:31 "they" are "the Jews." This

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[356] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 390.

[357] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 744.

[358] Brown, *The Gospel of St. John and the Johannine Epistles,* 87.

[359] We did not discuss Brown's assessment of Pilate in his 1975 work because the points on Pilate were spread throughout the article and Brown discussed them as means to discussing other aspects of the Johannine passion, but not in a treatment of itself. The most pertinent comment he makes at that time regarding Pilate is, "It is not Jesus who fears Pilate; it is Pilate who is afraid of Jesus, the Son of God (19:7–8). The real question is not what will happen to Jesus who controls his own destiny, but whether Pilate will betray himself by bowing to the outcry of the very people he is supposed to govern." Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 130.

[360] They are the same ones presumably who have interrogated Jesus in 18:12–27.

is not by accident. According to Brown, John *wants* the reader to think of them as "the Jews;" the chief priests may be the agents, but they have been joined to nation."[361] This is an important point for Brown as this is the second time he has said this in this publication.[362] Recall that Brown came to this similar conclusion, that John's intent is hostile, deliberate, and incriminating towards "the Jews," in *Community of the Beloved Disciple.* Brown recalls Schnackenburg who holds a position contrary to his own. Brown argues:

> Schnackenburg (John 3.248)[363] is wrong in arguing that John does not mean the whole Jewish nation, which had not as a totality given Jesus over to Pilate, but refers to their representatives, the elders, who are never mentioned in John. Such a historical argument is irrelevant; John is generalizing, for he sees "the Jews" of his time who have expelled Christian believers from the synagogue as the heirs of the hostile authorities of Jesus' time.[364]

Regardless of whether historically the Jewish nation was in agreement with handing Jesus over to Pilate, Brown argues that the author of John intended to communicate that they were. Brown reasserts the historical situation of the Johannine community because he sees this as vital to the overall understanding of John's intent. He says:

> In any case, 18:36 is very Johannine in having Jesus speak of 'the Jews' in such an alienated way that one would not suspect that he himself was Jewish. This is the language of the Johannine Christians expelled from the synagogue.[365]

Brown expounds on the multi-level quality of the Gospels in another introductory section called "Observations about Jewish Involvement in the Death of Jesus." He states:

> The following observations are intended as at least a small contribution (especially to those who treasure the Gospels) in reflecting on such a portrayal, which involves not only the relations between Jesus and some major leaders of his

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[361] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 744.

[362] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 91.

[363] Rudolph Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* (Translated by David Smith and G. A. Kon, vol. 3; New York: Crossroad, 1982), 3:248.

[364] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 749.

[365] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 750.

> people, but the relations in the last third of the 1st cent. between those who believed in Jesus and Jews who did not—and indeed even relations between Christians and Jews today.[366]

Once again Brown is alluding to the theory that the conflict described in the Gospels is not historically located during the time of Jesus, but includes sentiment and events from the time of the author's community which has been imported into the Gospel story. In addition, Brown is also suggesting that modern interpretation of the Gospel events affect the relations between Jews and Christians today. This is, in part, why historical biblical interpretation is so important, and why Brown is so opposed to excising offensive biblical passages, because even the negative passages teach us about attitudes from the past and allow us to make change in the future.

In this section, Brown explores the different possibilities regarding hostility towards Jesus during the 1st century.[367] First, Brown suggests that genuinely religious people could have disliked Jesus. Combating the overall perception that anyone during the time of Jesus who disliked Him must have been hypocritical, legalistic, politically motivated, or simply brutal, Brown discusses the possibility that Jesus was legitimately threatening. He explains:

> Historically we know of teachers and leaders in the Judaism of Jesus' time who were genuinely religious. On the one hand, Jesus is portrayed as consorting frequently and pleasantly with public sinners who take no offense at him. On the other hand, he criticizes scathingly a religious outlook that many would judge laudable, e.g., condemning as unjustified before God a Pharisee who has taken care not to break the commandments, who observes pious practices and prays, and who is generous to religious causes (Luke 18:11–14)[368]…If one takes the Gospels at face value… there emerges a Jesus capable of generating intense dislike.[369]

Recall that Brown presented a similar argument in *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI* in 1970.[370] Having established Jesus' potential threat to those without malicious

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[366] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 391.

[367] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 391–397.

[368] This section addresses the hostility towards Jesus by the Jews in all the Gospels, hence the reference to Luke. The overall assessment is equally applicable to John.

[369] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 392.

[370] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 799.

intent, he then punctuates his argument by taking the hostility out of the realm of Jews versus Jesus and redefining it as Jesus being universally offensive to religious establishment. Brown states:

> Those Christians who see Jesus as offensive only in the context of (what they think of as) legalistic Judaism fail to grasp that mutatis mutandis, he would be offensive on any religious scene if he told people that God wants something different from what they know and have long striven to do, and if he challenged established sacred teaching on his own authority as self designated spokesman for God.[371]

By using the term "those Christians" Brown has distanced himself from the opinion that views hostility towards Jesus as only possible from the position of legalistic Judaism. In addition, Brown has deliberately lessened the anti-Jewish impact by reinterpreting the hostility on universal terms, rather than Jew versus Jesus.[372]

Brown's next major point in this section is that in Jesus' time, religious opposition often led to violence. Drawing upon Luke Timothy Johnson,[373] Brown explains that even with the harsh sentiment expressed in the New Testament writings, the sentiment is mild if situated in the context of religious hostility in the first century. He states:

> Often the writings of the NT are considered strongly antiJewish; but as Johnson ("New Testament's") has shown, if we look to the historical and social context of the time and situate the NT among religious and philosophical writings, its attacks on the Jews are surprisingly mild. Beyond polemic, however, parallels suggest that truly religious Jews of the 1st cent. in their opposition to Jesus could have gone to the extreme of wanting him dead. Evidence for the period of 130 BC to AD 70 shows irrefutably that Jews hated and killed one another over religious issues."[374]

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[371] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 392–393.

[372] Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI*, 802: "There is scarcely a Christian church that cannot find in its history condemnations of good men leveled by religious assemblies with a similar variety of motives."

[373] Luke Timothy Johnson, "The New Testament's Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic," *Journal of Biblical Literature,* Vol. 108, No. 3 (Autumn, 1989), 419–441.

[374] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 394. Brown proceeds to cite Josephus and Dead Sea Scrolls to give examples such as Alexander Jannaeus' massacre of 6000 Jews at the Feast of Tabernacles over the question of his qualifications to hold priestly office and a high priest who sought the death of the Essene teacher of righteousness.

This is arguably a more sophisticated strategy to avoid anti-Judaism. Brown even uses the language, "this looks anti-Jewish but…" However, Brown's does not employ this so much to vindicate the author of John; he has already made it clear that John is deliberate and hostile in his intent. Instead, Brown seems to be using this as a way of addressing his readers, suggesting to them that they cannot harbor similar sentiments because the original sentiment was not as hostile in its native time and place. Brown uses Johnson's argument that compared to other intra-Jewish hostilities during the time of Jesus, the language in the NT is mild. After going through multiple examples of religious persecution by the Jews in the first century, he clarifies his position by saying:

> Lest anyone think that this paragraph written by a Christian is a covert attempt to deprecate Judaism, let me acknowledge clearly that Christians, motivated by the "love" of God and the defense of "truth," have matched or surpassed in intensity such religious hostility during two millennia of hating and killing fellow Christians.[375]

By implicating Christians as acting in the same manner as those who persecuted Jesus, Brown has attempted to remove the "us" versus "them" barrier. On the one hand, Brown has attempted to make the 1st century non-believing Jew any man, and on the other hand he has made the Christian one who could have crucified Christ—thus confounding the Christian versus Jew accusation. This is the second time Brown has specifically addressed Christians in regard to anti-Jewish sentiment. The first time was earlier when he suggested that even modern Christians might have found Jesus offensive if he had appeared to them and questioned their religious practices. While Brown has not done this in his previous writings, here in 1994, he targets perceptions that elevate one's own Christian piety at the expense of the Jews. Brown instead communicates that Christian religious history has had many moments where Christians have taken on the role of the persecutors.

Before exploring the nature of Jesus' dispute with the Jews, Brown communicates his preference for the term *responsibility* as opposed to the term *guilt* when discussing involvement in the death of Jesus, thus demonstrating another example of active

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[375] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 394.

sensitivity. Closing the introductory material with one final point, Brown argues that the dispute between the historical Jesus and the Jews was an intra-Jewish dispute. Brown states,

> The Gospel accounts of the passion have been made particularly inflammatory by a reading that has "those Jews" doing violence to "Jesus, the Christian." It is true that in the PNs of Matt and John, written after 70, "the Jews" appear as an alien group over against Jesus; but on the level of history Jews were dealing with a fellow Jew.[376]

Again, while the intra-Jewish context for the Gospel hostilities could be used as strategy to spare the Gospels of anti-Jewish charges, it is not what Brown is doing here. Instead, he is contextualizing the hostilities between Jesus and "the Jews" so as to remove the feeling of personal violation that his Christian readers might feel when they read of the persecution of Jesus, one of their own.

Similar to 1970, Brown uses the story of Jeremiah in the Bible to illustrate his point.[377] He demonstrates how Jeremiah was persecuted by the Jewish leaders of his time, yet nobody seems to call for Jeremiah's blood to be avenged.[378] According to Brown, this is because Jeremiah is an example of the *innocent* suffering at the hands of his *leaders.* Bloodguilt in Jeremiah's case is not an issue as the persecuted and those persecuting are all from the same group.[379] This situation could have been the same in the Gospels, except that the situation changed. Brown explains:

> Although much the same story is told of Jesus… the case is emotionally different because those who thought that Jesus was right ultimately became another religion. Jews and Christians were not able to say in this instance that one of *our* own whom God raised up was made to suffer by *our* leaders. Rather Christians spoke to Jews of your leaders doing this to our savior.[380]

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[376] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 396.

[377] Brown uses this example as well in *The Gospel According to John XIII–XXI,* however he has expanded this discussion here.

[378] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 396.

[379] Brown does not mention Matthew 23:35 in this accounting.

[380] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 396.

Again, Brown stresses that the Jewish attack on Jesus cannot be interpreted as an attack on the first Christian. Brown is trying to communicate that the split that happens later between the Jews and Christians cannot be used to unnaturally interpret the hostility between Jesus and his Jewish opponents in the Gospel setting. Brown closes this section realizing that while this situation may not change even in the modern age, it would "help readers of this commentary if they can remember that it was not thus during the time of the crucifixion and even when the story was first taking shape."[381] Again, in consciously attempting to educate his readers against potential anti-Judaism, Brown demonstrates his own awareness.

The biggest change in *Death of the Messiah* is Brown's overt attempt to actively combat anti-Jewish sentiment by addressing the readers of the Gospel. While he did this both in 1975 and 1979, it was not to the degree that he does it here in this work. Here in 1994, Brown spends many pages communicating that Christian hostility towards the Jews exists and is unacceptable. He makes intelligent and compassionate explanations making the "anti-Jesus," Jewish position of the 1st century not only understandable, but a real option to the sincere religious individual. Finally, he exposes centuries of Christian piety as being equal in its hatefulness and aggression to what the Jews have been accused of towards Jesus.

In regard to Brown's analysis of who "the Jews" are, he uses John 19:7 where "the Jews" say, "We have a law and according to the law he ought to die because he has made himself God's son" as a proof text. He states that since John attributes this saying to "the Jews," they cannot simply be equated with the world (recall Bultmann) or with a geographical designation (Judeans).[382] "The Jews" here is a term as that applies to a specific ethnic/religious group of people. Furthermore, Brown has repeatedly clarified in multiple sections in this work that while representing those hostile to Jesus during his ministry, "the Jews" is both a literary term and a historical group originating from the author's time period. Brown has suggested that regardless of historical accuracy, the Fourth Evangelist deliberately used this term to implicate those in the Synagogue of his

[381] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 396.

[382] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 829, fn.16.

own time. While this analysis is not new, the voracity with which Brown argues the deliberate hostility of the author of John has grown.

Since Brown's last publication on John, much has occurred. First, two Church statements were released regarding Christian relations with Jews. In 1988, The Consultation on the Church and Jewish People (CCJP) released the statement "The Churches and the Jewish People: Toward a New Understanding." The CCJP is a group of Christians from the member churches of the World Council of Churches (WCC) who are engaged in promoting Jewish-Christian dialogue. The second statement, "Christian - Jewish Dialogue Beyond Canberra '91," was released in 1991 by The Central Committee of the WCC. Recall that Brown was the first Catholic appointed to the Commission on Faith and Order, a group part of the larger World Council of Churches, and he served on that group from 1968 until 1993, just before *Death of the Messiah* was published.

Very little in these statements is new. The 1988 statement by the CCJP stresses dialogue and breaking down barriers, and this document recaps many other things that the WCC had said in other statements through the years.[383] It also draws explicitly on *Nostra Aetate*.[384] One unique aspect to this document is it states that, "coercive proselytism directed toward Jews is incompatible with Christian faith,"[385] taking further what was established in earlier documents, the rights of other faiths to self-define. At the conclusion of this document, a list of affirmations is given. The fifth affirmation states, "We acknowledge that the saving work of Christ gave birth to a new community of faith within the Jewish Community… The early Christians, too regarded themselves as faithful

[383] It states that, "adherents of other faiths should be free to 'define themselves,' as well as to witness to their own gifts, in respectful dialogue with others," and that anti-Semitism is incompatible with the Christian faith and once again rejects the notion that the Jews today share in guilt for the death of Christ. It goes on to say, "In Christian teaching the historic events which led to the crucifixion should not be so presented as to fasten upon the Jewish people of today responsibilities which belong to our corporate responsibility:" The Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, *The Churches and the Jewish People: Toward a New Understanding*, 1988. Stated previously in Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, *Guidelines on the Dialogue with People of Living Faiths*, 1977.

[384] "The Jews still remain dear to God because of their fathers, for He does not repent of the gifts He makes nor of the call He issues."

[385] The Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, *The Churches and the Jewish People: Toward a New Understanding,* 1988.

Jews."[386] The stress here is that Christianity began in the confines of Judaism and early Christians thought of themselves as Jews. It communicates the same thing that Brown does in *Death of the Messiah*, that Christians today must remember that Jesus was a Jew, and the early Christians thought of themselves as Jews. Thus modern anti-Judaism is not only morally wrong, but historically misplaced as well.

Affirmation six states:

> We deeply regret that, contrary to the spirit of Christ, many Christians have used the claims of faith as weapons against the Jewish people, culminating in the Shoah,[387] and we confess sins of the word and deed against Jews through the centuries. Although not all Christians in all times and all lands have been guilty of persecution of Jews, we recognize that in the Christian tradition and its use of Scripture and liturgy there are still ideas and attitudes toward Judaism and Jews that consciously or unconsciously translate into prejudice and discrimination against Jews.[388]

Brown in *Death of the Messiah* is more overt in his efforts to combat anti-Judaism than any previous work. The above affirmation makes the clear link between anti-Jewish attitudes and biblical interpretation. Brown has clearly made that link in *Death of the Messiah.*

The Central Committee's 1991 document stresses dialogue between Jews and Christians stating:

> Today in many parts of the world, religion is used as a divisive force, with religious language and symbols being used to exacerbate conflicts. We need to build mutual trust and a culture of dialogue… Both the telling and the hearing of faith are crucial in discerning God's will.[389]

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[386] The Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, *The Churches and the Jewish People: Toward a New Understanding,* 1988.

[387] The use of Shoah (a Jewish term) as opposed to Holocaust demonstrates a heightened sensitivity to Jewish concerns.

[388] The Consultation on the Church and the Jewish People, *The Churches and the Jewish People: Toward a New Understanding*, 1988.

[389] Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue Beyond Canberra 91*, August 1992.

It reiterates the Council's earlier position condemning anti-Semitism in all forms and calls Christian churches to "look into their own traditions, where teachings of contempt for Jews and Judaism proved a spawning ground for the evil of anti-Semitism."[390] This document goes on to say, "We are convinced that it is the Spirit that leads us into ever deepening relationship with the Jewish people as an integral part of God's economy of salvation for the world."[391] This is strong language, suggesting that God wants Christians and Jews to be in relationship, and that the salvation of the world depends on this. By the time these statements were written, Brown had been connected with the WCC for thirty years.[392] The Council's statements in 1988 and 1992 and Brown's heightened sensitivity are connected. In the same way that Brown's awareness to anti-Judaism grew as a result of his interaction with colleagues at Jewish Theological Seminary, so also there was mutual influence that caused growing awareness between Raymond Brown and the WCC.

In 1988, Brown served as a visiting professor of New Testament at the Pontifical Biblical Institute and scholar in residence at the North American College, both located in Rome. In 1990, Brown retired from Union Theological Seminary in New York and moved to Menlo Park, California. He chose to live at St. Patrick's seminary (Sulpician) and he remained there until his death in 1998. He continued to write, as is evidenced by *Death of the Messiah.* In addition to *Death of the Messiah,* Brown revised *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* and *Birth of the Messiah* and wrote multiple articles. It is clear from this work in his retirement that his concern over anti-Judaism grew rather than waned.

John Dominic Crossan's *Who Killed Jesus*

In many ways, one can argue that Brown's awareness of anti-Judaism culminates in *Death of the Messiah.* Interestingly enough, while this book is where Brown's anti-

[390] Central Committee of the World Council of Churches*, Christian-Jewish Dialogue Beyond Canberra 91*, August 1992.

[391] Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, *Christian-Jewish Dialogue Beyond Canberra 91*, August 1992.

[392] The paper he presented to the WCC was in 1963, and he was appointed to the Commission on Faith and Order in 1968.

Jewish concern peaks, it is the work that inspired John Dominic Crossan[393] to write his own book critiquing Brown, specifically in the area of sensitivity to anti-Judaism. Crossan's book, *Who Killed Jesus,* is a 227-page critique of Brown's *Death of the Messiah*, and the subtitle explains part of its mission: "Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of The Death of Jesus." The thesis of this book is that Brown has failed to adequately handle the anti-Jewish polemic in the passion narratives of the Gospels, although much of the critique that Crossan directs towards Brown is based on method of interpretation and not anti-Jewish sentiment on Brown's part.

Crossan recognizes Brown's direct treatment of anti-Judaism. However, he dismisses it as not enough stating:

> Brown insists that his "commentary will not ignore the ways in which guilt and punishment for the crucifixion of Jesus have been inflicted on Jewish by Christians, not the least in our own times." Yet, despite that statement and a long section on anti-Judaism (383–97), the best he can say about the historicity of those twin spittings is this: At the Jewish trial, "Such abuse is not at all implausible historically" (586). At the Roman trial, "there is no way of knowing whether this happened historically; at most one can discuss the issue of verisimilitude… The content of what is described in the Gospels about the Roman mockery is not implausible, whether historical or not" (874, 877). Is that really the best that historical scholarship can offer?[394]

This passage demonstrates the heart of Crossan's critique of Brown. It is not that Brown does not forcefully address anti-Judaism in an up-front manner; it is that he refuses to commit to a historical reconstruction without loopholes for escape. The careful wording that Brown uses often suggests possibilities for historical events, but he tends toward qualifying language that allows him to elude certainty. This approach is distasteful to Crossan who wants Brown to commit more forcefully to a historical reconstruction. Crossan goes on to say,

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[393] John Dominic Crossan was a member of the 13th-century Roman Catholic religious order, the Servites, from 1950 to 1969 and an ordained priest from 1957 to 1969, at which time he left the priesthood. He taught at DePaul University for 25 years. He was co-director of the Jesus Seminar from 1985-1996 and chair of the Historical Jesus Section of the Society of Biblical Literature from 1992-1998. He has authored such books as *The Birth of Christianity, The Historical Jesus,* and *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography, The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach About Jesus's Final Days in Jerusalem, Who is Jesus?,* and *The Cross That Spoke: The Origins of the Passion Narrative*

[394] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* ix.

> It is not a question of certitude, a word that Brown uses regularly to avoid final decision: "there are several limitations imposed by method and matter in our ability to acquire certitude about that history… Certitude about the historicity of the details is understandably infrequent" or again: "Absolute negative statements (e.g., the account has no historical basis) most often go beyond the kind of evidence available to biblical scholars" (1312). But historical scholarship is not called to absolutes or to certitudes but only to its own best reconstructions given accurately, honestly and publicly… We seldom get to beyond *any* doubt. But in the end, the judgments must be made and most historical reconstructions are based on "this is more plausible than that" rather than "this is absolutely certain" or "that is absolutely wrong. None of this allows us to hedge or to fudge or to hide behind double negatives like "not implausible" or "not impossible."[395]

Crossan is clear; he believes Brown is hiding behind ambiguous terminology. However, this is not his only critique. Crossan also disputes Brown's tendency to err on the side of the historicity of the Gospels. He quotes himself from a New York Times article where he offered a dissenting opinion to *Death of the Messiah*. The article said:

> "Basically the issue is whether the passion accounts are prophecy historicized or history remembered," said John Dominic Crossan, a professor of religious studies at DePaul University in Chicago. "Ray Brown is 80 percent in the direction of history remembered. I'm 80 percent in the opposite direction." (New York Times, March 27, 1994. National Section)[396]

To demonstrate what he meant by *history remembered* and *prophecy historicized*, Crossan draws upon Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the Gospel of Peter, which all assert[397] that when Jesus was crucified, even though it was day, darkness came across the land.[398] Crossan says:

> To explain those accounts as "history remembered" means that Jesus' companions observed the darkness, recorded it in memory, passed it on in tradition, and recalled it when writing their accounts of the crucifixion. It happened in history, and that is why it is mentioned in Gospel…By "prophecy historicized" I mean that no such *historical* three-hour-long midnight at noon accompanied the death of Jesus, but that learned Christians searching their scriptures found this ancient

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[395] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* x.

[396] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 1.

[397] Mark 15:33, Matt 27:45, Luke 23:44, Peter 5:15 & 6:22.

[398] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 2.

> description of future divine punishment, maybe facilitated by its mention of "an only son" in the second-to-last line, and so created that *fictional* story about darkness at noon to assert that Jesus died in fulfillment of prophecy.[399]

Crossan's explanation of Brown's approach is overly simplistic. Brown himself describes his approach in *Death of the Messiah* when he says:

> I see no need for such a dichotomy between acknowledging the narrative form of the passion and maintaining a respect for historical issues. I have already said that I do not think of the evangelists themselves as eyewitnesses of the passion; nor do I think that eyewitness memories of Jesus came down to the evangelists without considerable reshaping and development. Yet as we move back from the Gospel narratives to Jesus himself, ultimately there were eyewitnesses and earwitnesses who were in a position to know the broad lines of Jesus' passion.[400]

Brown does not assert that the Gospel writers have their own memories from the time of Jesus, although he does believe that they have inherited memories that were passed down to them that they formed into the Gospel story. Brown explains how the disciples themselves would have been in the position to carry on historical information about Jesus' passion. He states:

> It is *inconceivable* that they [the disciples] showed no concern about what happened to Jesus after the arrest. True, there is no Christian claim that they were present during the legal proceedings against him, Jewish or Roman; but it is *absurd* to think that some information was not available to them about why Jesus was hanged on a cross.[401]

Brown does not mention Crossan by name at all here. Yet when Crossan refers to this passage specifically in *Who Killed Jesus* he says, "I must admit, sorry for this, that I love the critical overkill my name elicits from Brown…"inconceivable and "absurd" at the start of his two volumes [14–15]."[402] Brown does discuss Crossan's position just a few

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[399] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 2–4. Emphasis on *historical* and *fictional* is Crossan's.

[400] Brown, *Death of the Messiah,* 14.

[401] Brown, *Death of the Messiah,* 14. Emphasis on inconceivable and absurd is mine.

[402] Crossan also refers to 1333 and 1342, other places where Brown critiques his position. On 1333, Brown discusses Crossan's theory that the canonical Gospels relied on the Gospel of Peter. The Gospel of Peter mentions the thief on the cross and that Jesus' legs were not broken. Brown uses the term "incomprehensible" in regard to the silence by John and Luke to each borrow one of these items from *GPet* but not the other. He uses "utter implausibility" in direct reference to Crossan's theory that *GPet* is the oldest Christian passion narrative because of its lack of knowledge of Palestinian milieu and history.

paragraphs later where he expresses clear disagreement with Crossan's position. He states:

> The issue of scriptural background becomes more debatable in views like those of Koester and J. D. Crossan…Crossan goes even further [stating]: "It seems to me most likely that those closest to Jesus knew almost nothing about the details of the event. They knew only that Jesus had been crucified, outside Jerusalem, at the time of Passover, and probably through some conjunction of imperial and sacerdotal authority." He does not explain why he thinks this "most likely," granted the well-founded tradition that those closest to Jesus had followed him for a long period of time, day and night. Did they suddenly lose all interest, not even taking the trouble to inquire about what must have been a most traumatic moment of their lives?[403]

Another example that demonstrates a sharper aspect of Crossan's critique of Brown occurs on the very first page of *Who Killed Jesus*. Crossan presents Brown as being callous to anti-Jewish sentiment. He recalls a statement that Brown made in a footnote of *Death of the Messiah* and highlights it in his own preface:

> After the Jewish trial in Mark 14:65, "some began to spit on him," mocking him as a pseudo-prophet. After the Roman trial in Mark 15:19, "the soldiers…spat upon him," mocking him as a pseudo-king. If you are being scourged and crucified, being spat upon or even slapped may seem a very minor indignity and hardly worth consideration then or now. But, as Father Raymond E. Brown, S.S., notes…those mockeries were recalled by "the Passiontide ceremony in the 9th–11th cents. in which a Jew was brought into the cathedral of Toulouse to be given a symbolic blow by the count—an honor!" (575 note 7). No Roman, one notices, was accorded a like honor.[404]

When Brown makes this statement in his footnote, he was being sarcastic. The indication is that in the context of this Passiontide ceremony, the French considered this "blow to a Jew" an honor, but for Brown this is shocking, and his use of the exclamation point emphasizes this. In fact, one of the things Brown addresses in *Death of the Messiah* is why "the Jews" have borne the continual responsibility for the events displayed in the Passion when both Jews and Romans were involved. Brown asserted that this was because the Romans eventually ceased to exist, and the Jews have remained to the

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[403] Brown, *Death of the Messiah,* 15.

[404] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* ix.

modern day. As Crossan highlights Brown's footnote, he seems to imply the opposite of what Brown intended.

In his section on "Anti-Judaism and Anti-Semitism," Crossan defines these two terms. He states:

> I distinguish those two terms because anti-Semitism only arrives in history when anti-Judaism is combined with racism. Anti-Judaism is a religious prejudice: a Jew can convert to avoid it. Anti-Semitism is a racial prejudice: a Jew can do nothing to avoid it. They are equally despicable but differently so.[405]

Even though Crossan distinguishes the terms here and recognizes that the Gospels may be anti-Jewish but not anti-Semitic, he uses the term *anti-Semitism* in the subtitle. This is because he sees anti-Semitism as being closely tied to anti-Judaism, and he sees anti-Judaism as being intricately linked to historical assessment of the passion narratives. Crossan explains:

> There may well be some stories in the New Testament that one can leave as "maybe historical" and avoid asserting one's best historical judgment or reconstruction about them. But the passion-resurrection stories are different because they have been the seedbed for Christian anti-Judaism. And without that Christian anti-Judaism, lethal and genocidal European anti-Semitism would have been either impossible or at least not widely successful. What was at stake in those passion stories, in the long haul of history was the Jewish Holocaust.[406]

For Crossan, the assessment of the passion narratives as historical, ultimately leads to the Holocaust. The Gospels are responsible for Christian anti-Judaism, which leads to anti-Semitism when religious prejudice is combined with racial prejudice. Once again, Crossan's issue with Brown is not that Brown displays a lack of awareness of anti-Judaism. Crossan says of Brown:

> His book *The Death of the Messiah* is acutely aware of the problem of anti-Judaism, and he has a special section entitled "Responsibility and/or Guilt for the Death of Jesus" (383–97). No one could read that chapter and accuse Brown of either anti-Judaism or anti-Semitism…I do not find any unfair, illegitimate, or invalid criticism of Judaism's religious tenets anywhere in Brown's book, and I emphasize that most strongly to offset any misunderstanding. *What is lacking*

[405] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 32.

[406] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 35.

> *however, is a fair, legitimate, and valid criticism of Christianity's passion stories.*[407]

For Crossan, Brown attributes too much historicity to the passion narratives; this, by virtue of a domino effect, leads to anti-Semitism. Crossan, further describing his own position on the historicity of the passion narratives states:

> It is quite possible to understand and sympathize with a small and powerless Jewish sect writing fiction to defend itself. But once that Jewish sect became the Christian Roman Empire, a defensive strategy would become the longest lie. The passion narratives challenge both the honesty of Christian history and the integrity of Christian conscience.[408]

This is what the passion narratives are for Crossan: defensive fiction that became the longest lie. He criticizes Brown for not committing to a position (his) regarding the historicity of the passion narratives. He states:

> Here are some exemplary points about the way Brown handles questions of historicity throughout the passion narratives. He speaks of "verisimilitude," which means that something is possible or could have happened but "it is not the same as historical likelihood" (18 note 24). Of course, but why use such an expression at all except to hint at historicity without having to affirm it. Or again he uses double negatives such as "not implausible" or "not impossible." [409]

Crossan goes on to explain why because of this Brown is culpable. He states:

> Think for a moment about the ethics of judging events as having "verisimilitude" or the morality of judging happenings with double negatives such as "not implausible." Historians should be ready and willing to say, This, in my best professional reconstruction, is what happened; that did not. And if with other subjects we can hedge on historicity decisions, Christian exegetes, theologians, and historians cannot do so on the passion narratives—not just because of what happened then, but because of what has happened since.[410]

Crossan has tied the interpretation of the passion narratives (as having historical merit) to the Holocaust. It is for this reason he is opposed to Brown's *Death of the Messiah.* Brown

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[407] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 35. Emphasis here is Crossan's.

[408] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 36.

[409] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 36.

[410] Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus,* 37.

has displayed a history of caution in asserting certainty in his biblical interpretation. He prefers to suggest likelihood, recognizing that that one cannot assert anything with certainty when dealing with a 2000-year-old historical reconstruction. In addition, Brown does not shy away from suggesting that hostility in the text is historical; and to the extent that he will affirm anything, he argues for historical involvement of the Jews in the Passion of Jesus. He has said in various publications that he prefers to interpret the biblical text with all its historical hostilities intact, and then preach forcefully against the adoption of such hostilities. This as we will see later, is a unique position. The bulk of *Who Killed Jesus* is Crossan's own interpretation, his rebuttal, of Brown's assessments on the historicity of the specific sections of the passion narratives.

Crossan's critique, that Brown avoids language that asserts certainty, is fair. Although, his conclusion that interpreting the passion narratives as having historical merit leads to the Holocaust does not appreciate Brown's unique approach. Brown thinks it is possible to deem as historical even events that portray the Jews negatively, without fostering anti-Jewish attitudes in the present. Crossan has acknowledged Brown's direct handling of anti-Judaism in the passion narratives, but only to say that it is not enough. However, he did not indicate whether or not he deemed other scholars as more sensitive to anti-Judaism than Brown. In order to evaluate Brown's contribution to anti-Jewish awareness in biblical scholarship, we must evaluate him in comparison to other scholars, which we will do in the conclusion. It is noteworthy that Brown never responded to Crossan's critique of *Death of the Messiah* in any written publication.

Introduction to the New Testament (1997)

In 1997, Brown's *Introduction to the New Testament* was published. Considering the attention given to the "anti-Jewish" question in the Fourth Gospel elsewhere in Brown's writings, the omission of any real treatment of anti-Judaism in John in this book by means of a separate section or devoted discussion is noteworthy. It could be that even though this vast book contains over 800 pages, only 50 pages is dedicated to the Gospel of John, thus potentially limiting Brown in his overall discussion. Whatever the reason, Brown's treatment of "the Jews" in this work is minimal.

The majority of Brown's dealing with the potential anti-Judaism or "the Jews" in John, in this work, is handled via footnotes. His first excursion onto the topic comes in his analysis of the Book of the Signs. Noting that a legal atmosphere colors the narrative where "the Jews" question John the Baptist, Brown adds a footnote. Like all of his work since 1966, the term "the Jews" is in quotation marks. Before even referring to the footnote, this is a subtle hint to those unfamiliar with Brown's other works that there might be issue for further investigation in regard to the use of this term. For those who know Brown's previous writings, we have already been educated that the term is loaded and is most appropriately and cautiously handled in quotes.

The footnote quickly addresses many of the issues handled at length in Brown's previous works. It states:

> The evangelist may well be a Jew by birth; yet most often he uses this expression with a hostile tone for those of Jewish birth who distrust or reject Jesus and his followers. "the Jews" include Jewish authorities but cannot be confined to them; and the generalizing term may be term may be an attempt to portray the Jewish opponents in the synagogues of John's time—opponents who are persecuting John's community (16:2) even as Jewish opponents in Jesus' time were remembered as persecuting him. Consequently, most often "the Jews" seem to be a disliked group separate from the followers of Jesus; and Jesus at times speaks as a nonJew (or, at least, not as one of those "Jews"). [411]

Brown's general definition for "the Jews" here is consistent with his 1988 definition: those of Jewish birth who distrust or reject Jesus and his followers. His explanation of the relationship between "the Jews" and the Jewish authorities is clearer than it has been in the past. None of this information is new; its value here is that it can be seen as an up-to-date summary of Brown's view in 1997.

"The Jews" are mentioned in this work in other places when they specifically come up in the text; however, Brown does not give an exhaustive treatment of the negative use of "the Jews" outside of what was expounded upon in his single footnote.[412]

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[411] Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 339, fn.13.

[412] Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 339. He notes that in John 4, the Samaritan woman "smarts" back to Jesus question as she has been used to the "injustice of Jewish treatment of Samaritan women," 343. Brown again deals with "the Jews" as they appear in the text when dealing with John 5:9 where Jesus heals the lame man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath. The reference to "the feast of the Jews" makes the Jews seem "other" than the author; in addition, "the Jews" sought to kill Jesus when they realized that not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was making himself equal to God, 344–345.

Brown does not gloss the passages on "the Jews" with any explanation of anti-Judaism, but rapidly moves through them as a means to explaining other points.[413]

There are other places where the question of potential anti-Judaism could easily be addressed. One of these places is when Brown discusses the comparison between John and the Synoptic Gospels.[414]As stated in previous works, John mentions "the Jews" over seventy times, more than the other three Gospels combined. While Brown addresses other issues of comparison, he only makes brief mention of this difference here. In regard to potential authorship and roots of John being in Judaism and Palestine, Brown uses 9:22 and 12:43 to state that, "those who confessed Jesus had been expelled from the synagogue and Christians had even been killed by pious devotees of the synagogue (16:2).[415]

In general, this is one of Brown's larger and better-known works. Similar to *Death of the Messiah*, it is a great resource on the New Testament. Because of the large scope, however, it lacks detail in certain areas such as the Johannine portrayal of "the Jews" and potential anti-Judaism. This book does not display any change in Raymond Brown's thinking on the Johannine community or "the Jews." Thus, much of what was seen in the past three publications is presented here in briefer form. Brown sees "the Jews" as those of Jewish birth who opposed Jesus. When the author of John used the term, he was thinking of "the Jews" from his own time who were persecuting his own community and excommunicating them from the Synagogue. As a result, the Johannine community (and the Fourth Evangelist) had immense hostility to those "Jews." "The Jews" represent real people from the time of Jesus, the time of the Johannine community, and they function as the role of the antagonists in the Gospel story.

A brief mention of the possibility of Johannine Christians being cast out of the synagogue is made when Brown address John 9 and the blind man who washed in the waters of Siloam and was cast out of the synagogue, but no explanation or reference to the specific question of anti-Judaism is made here, 348–349. Again in the Passion account, Brown appropriately mentions John's clarification (18:31) as to why Pilate was involved in the crucifixion, that "the Jews" were not permitted to put anyone to death, 357.

[413] It should be noted that Brown's decision to avoid the Jewish question in these passages should not be read as a shying away from the hard questions as he is more than willing to address the anti-Jewish question in works before and after this text.

[414] Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 364.

[415] Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 370.

Probably the most significant event to occur for Brown since *Death of the Messiah* is that in 1996 he was once again appointed to the Pontifical Biblical Commission, this time by Pope John Paul II. Brown served until his death in 1998. He also gave the Martin D'Arcy lecture series in Campion Hall, Oxford, where he lectured on "New Testament scholarship and Christianity today,"[416] and the T. W. Manson Memorial series in Manchester, UK, both in 1996.

A Retreat with John the Evangelist (1998)

While Raymond Brown's scholarly writings on John have demonstrated gradual change over time culminating in *Death of the Messiah*,[417] his concern over anti-Judaism in the Gospel is at the forefront of this 1998 work, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist.* A devotional book published by St. Anthony's Press, the format is arranged in such a way so as to make the reader feel as though he or she is on a personal retreat with John the Evangelist. It should be noted that this is the last book that Brown published before his death. [418]

A unique literary aspect to this work that has not been seen in any of Brown's previous works is that he speaks in the first person on behalf of the Evangelist to clarify misconceptions about the Gospel.[419] The pattern for the series "A Retreat with…" is that the reader attends a seven-day retreat with his or her "guide."[420] It is at Brown's request that the original format of this series was modified so the author (Brown, in this instance)

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[416]See: http://www.ox.ac.uk/gazette/1995-6/weekly/210396/lecs.htm#18Ref.

[417] There is a thirty-two year span between *The Gospel According to John I-XII* and *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*.

[418] It is interesting that his 1960 work and this last publication are both small, inspirational books on the Gospel of John, geared to a church audience.

[419] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist* , 6.

[420] The "guide" is the writer chosen for each particular volume. Brown wrote the volume on John the Evangelist. Other volumes include, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John Paul II, Theresa of Avila, Thomas Merton, etc.

could write in the first person as the guide and refer to himself in the third person as the translator.[421]

This becomes evident immediately as Brown discusses the introductory materials and gives background on the authorship of the Gospel to his reader. Brown writes:

> Before he ever started discussing this "retreat," the first thing your Translator[422] said on encountering me[423] was "Are you John the Evangelist?" That threw me because my name does not happen to be John… Your translator explained to me that since I forgot to put my name on what I wrote, many who had read it thought I was John, son of Zebedee… I realized that if I had given the Translator my name, he would have insulted me by reporting he never heard of me.[424]

Wasting no time, Brown immediately communicates to his reader in this strange but effective method, not only that the author of the Fourth Gospel is not John, but that he is nobody that the reader would have heard of (i.e., the beloved disciple). For some readers this information will be jarring. However, the style in which it is communicated (a first-person address from the author himself) is arguably both disarming and authoritative, perhaps one of the reasons Brown took this approach.

In Day 1 (chapter 1), two things are worth noting. Brown, speaking in the first person as the author of John, says:

> *We who were Jews*[425] prided ourselves in the knowledge that Moses had gone up Mt. Sinai and spoken with God, but Jesus did not have to go up to be in God's presence because he was already there.[426]

Later in that same chapter, Brown on behalf of the Fourth Evangelist states, "In *our* Jewish Scriptures, one way divine Wisdom came among us was as the gift of the Law

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[421] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 6.

[422] Remember, the "translator" refers to Brown.

[423] "Me" and "I" in this work refer to the author of the Gospel.

[424] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 14–15.

[425] Emphasis mine. The past tense (We who *were* Jews) could be taken as 1) they were Jewish but are no longer, or 2) as a person looking back over the years and recalling something that happened a long time ago, in this case from the present time of the "retreat" to the time of the author during the first-century.

[426] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 18.

through Moses."[427] In these statements, Brown communicates two things: first, that John and his community considered themselves to be Jews (both in regard to self-identification and by calling the Jewish Scriptures "our" Scriptures), and second, that Jesus in both cases is to be identified in strong Jewish themes (He is one greater than Moses and Wisdom in the form of Law). It is important to remember that Brown's audience with this book are fellow lay Catholics. Similar to *Death of the Messiah*, Brown is teaching his readers that Jesus is to be understood as a Jew and not as a Christian.[428]

It is in the next chapter that Brown addresses the issue of the Jews of the Jerusalem Temple. However, before he addresses specific characters and events in the Gospel, Brown communicates that the characters in the Fourth Gospel have a universal quality. He states:

> You will see before you a whole cast of characters…These various characters had different types of encounters with Jesus reflecting their respective personalities and backgrounds. Yet in another sense each is a representative of all women and men… Therefore in some way the readers of my "Gospel Message" are to see themselves in each of these upon whom I shall reflect with you.[429]

Without diminishing the overall historical quality of the Gospel, Brown stresses the literary function of the Gospel by communicating that each character is a type. Any person can be any character. This is the first time Brown has stressed the literary aspects of the characters in the Gospel to this degree. By doing this, Brown removes the possibility of his readers demonizing characters in the Gospel because of race, ethnicity, gender, or other inherent qualities, and instead simplifies the good/evil nature of the characters to their actions, beliefs, and whether they accept Jesus.

When Brown addresses "the Jews" for the first time, he says:

> Your translator has told me that many are offended by what I have written my Gospel message about "the Jews;" frankly, I have been misunderstood… The Jews in this scene serve only as an example of religious people who are offended

[427] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 22. Emphasis mine.

[428] What will become evident later is that Brown uses this book as a means of battling latent ecclesiastical anti-Judaism. What he has done in this chapter is lay the foundation for what is to come later by strongly rooting both John and Jesus as Jews, therefore to be anti-Jewish is to be anti-Jesus.

[429] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 28.

> when they see Jesus challenging religious practices they have come to accept. In that respect, they could stand for religious people of all time.[430]

Approaching the issue of the Fourth Gospel's use of "the Jews" in the same way that he addressed the universal nature of all characters in the Gospel, Brown redefines "the Jews" not as an ethnic or religious group, but as a type. He seems to exculpate the author of malicious intent, and instead "clarifies" that it is the behavior of these particular Jews that is condemned, and not any aspect that is inherent to their being as Jews. Anyone could be a "Jew" in John.

In this same section Brown, speaking as the Fourth Evangelist, stresses that Jesus may have been equally harsh in our own similar circumstances, He states:

> I am sure that in the long time period that separates me from you, my readers, similar circumstances have occurred. Yet Jesus' attitude would be just as condemnatory if he faced them—unreasonable in the eyes of those who advocated logical compromises…Jesus challenges us to look to another and higher standard of values—his Father's standard.[431]

In this unique mode of writing, Brown is able to have the Fourth Evangelist himself explain that "the Jews" are not a specific religious entity, but an attitude. Any person or group could be guilty of the same religious arrogance as this particular group of Jews. By stressing that the issue here is not anti-Judaism, but anti-religiosity and rejection of Jesus, Brown has attempted to remove the anti-Jewish element in this passage. He did this before in *Death of the Messiah*; however, the personal tone Brown has chosen for this publication makes him seem more persuasive.

Addressing another potentially anti-Jewish passage, John 9:13-17 (where Jesus heals the blind man by making clay), Brown tries to make the Jewish response seem understandable in light of Jesus' radical new ideas and his heavenly perspectives. He states:

> Jesus coming from above raised new religious issues and inevitably caused offense… it was not necessarily out of malice that many rejected him. He was Jewish and they were Jewish; but if Jesus came back into your time, he would

[430] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 31.

[431] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 32.

> then be equally offensive to many good religious people who identify themselves as his followers [Christians]. As one who has come from God, he challenges our earthly perceptions of God at any time and cautions us about applying religious judgments from the past without nuance, to *new* situations.[432]

Addressing the potential anti-Judaism from multiple directions, Brown first suggests that the rejection of Jesus did not have to be fueled by hatred. Describing an intra-Jewish situation, Brown suggests that the reader might find themselves just as offended if they were to encounter the real Jesus. Thus, Brown removes culpability from the "Jews" of John 9, once again displaying them to be a "type," and makes any person capable of the same reaction. Again, none of this is new; Brown said all of this in *Death of the Messiah*, however, the tone and the first person address magnifies the impact.

Finally, displaying more sensitivity towards anti-Judaism than has been seen before in any of his previous work Brown communicates regret in the voice of the Fourth Evangelist. He says:

> I am told that many have found references to "the Jews" in my "Gospel Message" offensive.[433] When your Translator recounted for me the hatred for the Jews that developed in subsequent centuries, I saw how passages I had written could be read in light of that later experience and how meanings could emerge that I never dreamed of—a humbling discovery. I was born a Jew and understand what it was like to be hated simply for being a Jew… It was the Samaritan members of our [Johannine] community who were the first to use the "Jews" as a derogatory term.[434]

While we have no way of knowing what the real sentiment of the Fourth Evangelist would be, Brown has him/her taking responsibility and expressing remorse ("humbling discovery") for the severity of certain Johannine passages. He asserts that was never the intent of the Evangelist for the Gospel to be used against the Jews or to be read with an imported hatred that was not present during the Gospels conception. This is tricky. Ever

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[432] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 46.

[433] It is interesting that Brown is not only addressing the potentially anti-Jewish statements in the Gospel and bringing them to light, but he seems also to be defending the integrity of the Gospel to those who find it offensive. He seems to be addressing a wide group of people: those who need to be educated on the potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel as well as those who need to "forgive" the Gospel for the anti-Judaism that offends them.

[434] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 69–70. Recall the Samaritan introduction of "the Jews" as a derogatory term was discussed in *Community of the Beloved Disciple.*

since *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, Brown has asserted that the use of "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel was a deliberate attempt by the author of John to spread guilt for the rejection of Jesus to the Synagogue of his own time. Here Brown suggests that the negative picture of the Jews that emerges from the Gospel of John, especially interpreted in light of later anti-Judaism, is something the author did not intend.

Brown moves on to explain (again in the voice of the Fourth Evangelist) the reason for Johannine hostility towards "the Jews." He states:

> Let me explain why other members of our community, mostly Jews by birth themselves (myself included) became hostile toward "the Jews." Gradually synagogue authorities became alarmed over our faith in Jesus as God's only Son… for all practical purposes we were no longer Jews.[435]

With this passage, Brown communicates in simple language how Jews could be hostile to other Jews, and what the source of the dispute was between these two groups of Jews. The stress of the intra-Jewish dispute, not for the purpose of navigating around anti-Judaism in the Gospel, but for the purpose of communicating to Christian readers that their own hostile attitudes are misplaced, is something that goes back to Brown's 1975 article, 28 years before this book was published. Brown goes on to explain that when the Johannine community was excommunicated from the Synagogue, they were placed on the Roman radar for persecution. Sometimes this persecution resulted in death. Continuing the interpretation of 16:2 that was first introduced in to *Community of the Beloved*, Brown reasserts here that the persecution to death of the Johannine community was actually Roman persecution that is blamed on "the Jews" because of the excommunication. Brown continues to explain that:

> Upon rereading my "Gospel Message," I [fourth evangelist] acknowledge that bitterness over these events governed his usage of "the Jews." …By the time I wrote, most of my fellow Jews who had heard of Jesus did not accept his proclamation, so that increasingly for us who believed in Jesus the "Jews" of our experience were "those people over there," an alien group, even as was the larger world that refused to believe in Jesus. Quite frankly I never gave thought to Jews

[435] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 69–70.

> (or others) who had never heard of Jesus or Jews of future generations and I sincerely regret that my words were applied to them.[436]

Brown demonstrates how the bitter use of "the Jews" originated in the Fourth Gospel and how the Jews of the Johannine community could come to see "the Jews" as alien. Coming close to an explanation for Bultmann's theory,[437] Brown shows how it could be easy to group "the Jews" with the unbelieving world. While not exactly an apology for penning the words, Brown does have the Fourth Evangelist apologize for the misappropriation of his words, especially towards those not part of the immediate dispute. Closing this chapter, in the voice of the Fourth Evangelist, Brown shows how having been kicked out of the synagogue and deprived of their Jewish feasts, the Johannine community was able to find in Jesus the fulfillment of all of which they had been deprived. Careful not to suggest that the Fourth Gospel displays a universal replacement of Jewish feasts, Brown communicates how the Johannine community through Jesus was able to replace for themselves what they had lost.

Every chapter of this book ends with a prayer. At the end of this chapter (Day 5), the closing prayer that Brown includes is as follows:

> Almighty God, your Jewish people and your Christian people honor you with feasts recalling the salvific deeds you have done on our behalf. May you remove from our hearts any bitterness towards each other. May both of us continue to find in you the source of our life and hope. In particular, may we Christians recognize how in Jesus your very presence has dwelt among us, so that he is our living temple sanctuary where we may worship in Spirit and truth.[438]

While the last sentence is distinctly Christian, the rest of the prayer seems to suggest that both Jews and Christians find God as they celebrate their own feasts. There is no indication here that Brown calls for Jewish conversion. In fact, he refers to salvific deeds available to both groups, and prays for the removal of bitterness. In the context of the discussion of the Johannine replacement of Jewish feasts, Brown seems to be reinterpreting this in such a way that it does not nullify the practice of traditional Jews,

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[436] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 70–71.

[437] Recall Bultmann saw "the Jews" as symbols of unbelief, like the world in John.

[438] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 70–71.

but restores the feasts for those who were once Jews but are no longer. Thus, Brown has the Fourth Gospel giving to those who have lost (the Johannine community and Christians afterwards), but not taking from those who already have (the Jews).

In chapter 6 (Day 6), when discussing the Johannine Epistles and the commandment to love, Brown mentions Vatican II and specifically *Nostra Aetate.* He says:

> Your Translator has told me of a great meeting of leaders of the communities of believers [Vatican Council II] that he seemed to regard as the most important religious event of his lifetime… it seems that through it followers of Jesus who previously had concentrated on their own spiritual life became more aware of others who believed in Jesus and also of many other who worshiped different gods or even no God at all. Accordingly they expanded their concept of love to include all these people.[439]

While Brown first mentioned *Nostra Aetate* in *Death of the Messiah*, ironically it is here when he is speaking in a role outside of himself and twice removed (in the role of the Translator being quoted by the Fourth Evangelist), that we find out how much Brown valued Vatican II and, specifically, *Nostra Aetate*. It is possible that the magnitude of the event and the impact it had on Raymond Brown was not felt immediately, but grew over the years until it became the "most important religious event of his lifetime."

In closing remarks, Brown reiterates the Fourth Evangelist's perspective on "the Jews" and clarifies that "the Jews" are not equated to the world. He states:

> Some would equate our [Johannine] lack of love for the world with our attitude toward "the Jews" who, like the world, could not accept Jesus. No!—Despite my occasional very strong language about "the Jews" that is not true. As I explained in a previous retreat session, we argued with Jewish synagogue authorities[440] about God's will, but we all accepted that there was one God whom we should serve. The world in our thought had an evil Prince that it served.[441]

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[439] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 84. Brown continues this quote by condemning strife within the Church and saying, "Unless you who believe that Jesus is God's Son love one another, an all-embracing love for outsiders is not impressive. Indeed it is scarcely possible, for we are channels not creators of the love that comes from Christ, and it passes through the fellow Christians whom we love in order to reach those who are not yet believers."

[440] Note that while Brown is really talking about "the Jews" he uses synagogue authorities to replace them.

[441] Brown. *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 86.

Similar to the discussion of the Jewish feasts, Brown clarifies the relationship of "the Jews" with the Johannine community and presumably intends for this model to apply to modern Jews and Christians as well. While the language could get strong, the dispute between "the Jews" and the Johannine community was over how to interpret the will of their common God. This is not the case with "the world." The world did not worship the same God as the Johannine community and "the Jews," but instead served an evil entity. Thus, the world cannot be equated with "the Jews." While not explicit, Brown hints at the possibility of "the Jews" having their own way to God.

There is much here. Many pages of this small, devotional book are dedicated to combating any perception of anti-Judaism in the text of the Gospel or in the intent of the author. Brown does not avoid the topic, but he addresses it immediately and continually. He makes both explanation and apology in the first person voice of the Evangelist for how passages have been misappropriated. This book is Brown's last publication before his death. None of the content in this book is new. Much of what is here can be found in *Community of the Beloved Disciple* and *Death of the Messiah*. What is new is the persuasive tone that Brown uses in this book to combat anti-Judaism in regard to this Gospel. He is actively sensitive and evangelistic in his zeal to combat the potential anti-Judaism that could be gleaned from the Fourth Gospel.

What makes the presentation of this material especially striking is that *Community of the Beloved Disciple* consists of 208 pages of scholarly investigation on Johannine community, which includes analysis on its relationship to "the Jews." *Death of the Messiah* similarly, consists of 1608 pages on Passion Narratives of the four Gospels, which includes an evaluation of anti-Jewish sentiment. *A Retreat with John the Evangelist* has only 102 pages. In its limited space, not only does Brown highlight and explain the reasons for the hostility towards "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel, he uses the first-person voice of John the Evangelist to contextualize the hostility, apologize for it, and suggest that future hostilities were never intended.

For Brown, "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel are a type. Brown states at the beginning that "the Jews" represent a religious attitude. In this way, "the Jews" serve a role. Brown uses this explain that any person of any religion could assume a similar

attitude; anyone could be one of John's "Jews." However, Brown presents all those involved in the Gospel as ethnic and religious Jews by birth (not by attitude). The issue of contention is not ethnic or geographical, but belief in Jesus. "The Jews" are those of the author's community who have excommunicated them (the author and his community) from the Synagogue. They are to be historically located during the author's time. Brown does not discuss the historicity of "the Jews" in the time of Jesus in this publication. What is clear is that the issue of anti-Judaism in the Gospels (and, specifically, how this issue is understood by the Christian community) is of utmost importance to Brown in 1998. He has moved from unawareness of the problem of potential anti-Judaism in John (1960), to awareness of it (1966), to explaining it (1979–1994), to apologizing for it (1998).

On March 16, 1998, The Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews released the statement, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah.* Recall, that at the time this document was formed, Brown was serving on the Pontifical Biblical Commission, the parent body that governs the above commission. This document was published conjunctively with a letter sent by Pope John Paul II to the President of the Commission, Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy, detailing his hope for what this document would do. It has been seen as another step in implementing the Vatican II document, *Nostra Aetate.*

In his letter, Pope John Paul II stated:

> As we prepare for the beginning of the Third Millennium of Christianity, the Church is aware that the joy of a Jubilee is above all the joy that is based on the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation with God and neighbour. Therefore she encourages her sons and daughters to purify their hearts, through repentance of past errors and infidelities. She calls them to place themselves humbly before the Lord and examine themselves on the responsibility which they too have for the evils of our time.[442]

The tone of this letter, and the rest of the document, is one of repentance; the same tone is also evident throughout Brown's 1998 book. The document begins with what its title suggests, remembrance. It states:

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[442] Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy*, 12 March 1998. n.p. [cited 8 May 2009]. Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_16031998_shoah_en.html.

> This century has witnessed an unspeakable tragedy, which can never be forgotten: the attempt by the Nazi regime to exterminate the Jewish people, with the consequent killing of millions of Jews. Women and men, old and young, children and infants, for the sole reason of their Jewish origin, were persecuted and deported. Some were killed immediately, while others were degraded, illtreated, tortured and utterly robbed of their human dignity, and then murdered.[443]

Further on, it addresses the issue that the atrocities of the Shoah occurred in Christian Europe. It states:

> The fact that the Shoah took place in Europe, that is, in countries of long-standing Christian civilization, raises the question of the relation between the Nazi persecution and the attitudes down the centuries of Christians towards the Jews.[444]

Having addressed the basic issue of Christian anti-Judaism, *We Remember* goes on to summarize the long history of Jewish-Christian relations. It recalls:

> In the pagan Roman Empire, Jews were legally protected by the privileges granted by the Emperor and the authorities at first made no distinction between Jewish and Christian communities. Soon however, Christians incurred the persecution of the State. Later, when the Emperors themselves converted to Christianity, they at first continued to guarantee Jewish privileges. But Christian mobs who attacked pagan temples sometimes did the same to synagogues, not without being influenced by certain interpretations of the New Testament regarding the Jewish people as a whole. In the Christian world—I do not say on the part of the Church as such—erroneous and unjust interpretations of the New Testament regarding the Jewish people and their alleged culpability have circulated for too long, engendering feelings of hostility towards this people. Such interpretations of the New Testament have been totally and definitively rejected by the Second Vatican Council.[445]

The mention of Christians incurring persecution from the state sounds very much like Brown's long-standing interpretation of John 16:2, going all the way back to *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, indicating the influence of the findings of historical biblical criticism on official Catholic statements. This document also stresses the importance of

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[443] Council for Religious Relations with the Jews, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, 16 March 1998

[444] Council for Religious Relations with the Jews, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, 16 March 1998.

[445] Council for Religious Relations with the Jews, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, 16 March 1998.

biblical interpretation for proper attitudes towards the Jewish people and draws upon Vatican II to emphasize that interpretations of the Bible that foster hostility towards the Jews have been firmly rejected. Both of these assertions are ones that Brown has repeatedly made in his various works, especially since *Death of the Messiah* in 1994. Finally, once again stressing repentance, but a repentance that leads to future action, *We Remember* states:

> At the end of this Millennium the Catholic Church desires to express her deep sorrow for the failures of her sons and daughters in every age. This is an act of repentance (teshuva), since, as members of the Church, we are linked to the sins as well as the merits of all her children. The Church approaches with deep respect and great compassion the experience of extermination, the Shoah, suffered by the Jewish people during World War II. It is not a matter of mere words, but indeed of binding commitment. "We would risk causing the victims of the most atrocious deaths to die again if we do not have an ardent desire for justice, if we do not commit ourselves to ensure that evil does not prevail over good as it did for millions of the children of the Jewish people ... Humanity cannot permit all that to happen again."[446]

This document has displayed repentance for its own sake, but also repentance for the sake of future change and warning against a repeated history. Repentance was evidenced in Brown's *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, and because of the strange way in which Brown chose to write, he was able to "repent" as one linked to the sins of John the Evangelist. The importance of proper biblical interpretation for Brown has always been for the sake of its own historical merit, but also for the effect that it has on modern attitudes and communities. Once again, Brown has been both affected by the words in this document and has been one who affects, as he likely had part in the formation of *We Remember.*

[446] Council for Religious Relations with the Jews, *We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah*, 16 March 1998.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF BROWN'S POSTHUMOUS WORKS

An Introduction to the Gospel of John (1998/2003)

In 2003, the book *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* was published after Raymond Brown's death. Edited by Francis J. Maloney, this book was written by Brown, but his premature death left the task of publication incomplete. Maloney offers in his editor's introduction insight into the changes in Johannine scholarship that constituted this work. In an overall sense, this book can be considered an update or addendum to Brown's Anchor Bible Commentaries on John, which were published in 1966 and 1970 respectively. Brown has used the modern information that has emerged in the last 30 years of Johannine scholarship to restate, modify, or revise what was stated in his earlier books.[447] One example of this is his reconstruction of the Johannine community and the composition stages of the Gospel. While at one point Brown delineated five stages, now he only suggests three.[448] According to Maloney, however, "the most significant single contribution that this new *Introduction* will make is the chapter… where Brown discusses the purpose of the Gospel and traces hints of apologetic."[449] Maloney continues on by saying that "crucial to this chapter is a completely updated and documented study of the use of "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel."[450] In other words, Brown has specifically and

[447] It is important to remember however, that Brown himself, did not get to escort this book to completion. As a result, his personal notes and commentary are absent in many places. In addition, areas that he might have omitted and sections he might have nuanced are left without his final editing.

[448] In truth, the five stages are still present, only Brown has now combined the stages so as to have only three distinct stages.

[449] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 8.

[450] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 9.

deliberately reevaluated and re-summarized his position on "the Jews" in John in this posthumous publication.

In this chapter, Brown has an entire subsection entitled "Apologetic against the Jews." [451] By means of a footnote,[452] he quickly addresses the terms *anti-Semitism* and *anti-Judaism,* arguing against the use of the former and cautioning against the use of the latter in relation to the Fourth Gospel. Brown states:

> "Anti-Semitism" reflects racial theories about the Jews that have flourished in the last two centuries. Even "anti-Judaism" has to be confined, for the issue in John has none of the tones of pagan Gentile dislike for Jews attested in the period of 200 B.C. to A.D. 100, for example purification rules (no pork), odd Sabbath behavior, mutilating their bodies in circumcision, impiously not appreciating the honor paid to the gods.[453]

However, while the term "anti-Semitic" is out of order for the Gospel of John, considering the constant negative usage of the term *"the Jews,"* the term *anti-Judaism* may not be. In one of his most direct handlings of the issue, Brown concedes that, "an analysis of "the Jews" raises the issue of whether Jesus or John[454] was anti-Jewish."[455] Brown methodologically sets out preliminary parameters for answering the question. First, he will make his analysis on two levels, "distinguishing between the 20s (Jesus lifetime) and usage after A.D. 70 (when the Gospel was written).[456] In a footnote, he states that he is not interested in historical fact, but historical plausibility.[457] For Brown, the question is not whether historically Jesus actually said certain things, but whether he *could* have said certain things (in all likelihood). It is not whether or not Jesus had Jewish

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[451] Brown actually divides this section into two subsections: *Apologetic against "the Jews" Who Refuse to Believe in Jesus* (157) and *Apologetic against the Jews Who Did Not Confess Publicly Their Belief in Jesus* (172).

[452] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 158, fn.19.

[453] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 158 n.19.

[454] The Gospel writer.

[455] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 158.

[456] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 158.

[457] His approach here may indicate the influence of Crossan's critique upon his methodology.

enemies (Brown has already conceded that the synoptics leave very little doubt of this), but whether Jesus actually called these enemies "the Jews."[458]

Brown begins this investigation by examining the conflict between Jewish groups during the first century. He states:

> The history of Judaism in the last centuries before the Roman destruction of the Temple in A.D. 70 shows almost constant conflict among groups, Pharisees, Sadducees and Essences, even to the point of killing one another, but since all were Jews, nobody would speak of an "anti-Jewish" attitude among them. Nor to my knowledge did one of these groups call their opponents "the Jews." Thus, Jesus as depicted in the Synoptic Gospels was certainly not anti-Jewish, even if sometimes he may have been anti-Pharisee or anti-Sadducee. [459]

Brown gives examples of, some references to "the Jews" in John that might be plausible. He explains:

> Some of the Johannine uses of "Jews" are not implausible on this level, e.g., … Jesus could have told a Samaritan that salvation is from the Jews; in response to Jesus, Pilate could have asked, "Am I a Jew?"; not inappropriate would be the comment that Jesus traveled in Galilee and not in Judea because the Jews (=Judeans?) were looking for a chance to kill him (7:1).[460]

However, there are other times where it seems unlikely that Jesus would have used the term "the Jews" in the way the Gospel depicts. Brown continues:

> Can one conceive Jesus the Jew saying to his Jewish disciples "As I told the Jews, so I now tell you" (13:33)? Addressing the Pharisees, he surely would not have said in reference to the Jewish Scriptures, "In *your* Law it is stated" (8:17) or to have asked, "Is it not written in *your* own Law" (10:34). [461]

According to Brown it unlikely that Jesus actually said these things. It is more likely that these phrases came from a later time when the Jews were separate from the community of the Gospel writer. As a result, the beginning point for interpreting John must change.

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[458] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 159, fn. 21.

[459] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 159.

[460] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 159.

[461] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 159–160.

It is in this context that once again Brown expresses one facet of his interpretive method as a commentator of John. He states:

> Some would eliminate "Jews" from the translation of John. Although their goal is good (preventing modern readers from developing a hostile attitude toward Jews), I disagree strongly with this solution. One is not reading a Greek Gospel written in Jesus' lifetime but a Gospel written some six decades later. Therefore for those interested in the literal sense of the Gospel, the starting issue must be what the Johannine writer meant and what he wrote, not what Jesus meant in his lifetime.[462]

As displayed in earlier works Brown does not approve of any "censoring" of the Gospel. He thinks that it is more important for the reader to be exposed to what the Gospel writer intended.

Brown argues that John is more profoundly "Jewish" than any other New Testament work. What that means is that there does not seem to be any hostility towards the religious heritage of Judaism in John.[463] According to Brown, the anti-Jewish issue rests chiefly on how John refers to "the Jews."[464] In this work, Brown has delineated four categories for the purpose of evaluating the Gospel's different uses of "the Jews." This method is new. In 1966, Brown acknowledged that the various ways that the Gospel of John uses "the Jews." However the attempt at actual classification is new to this work.

The four terms that Brown uses to categorize the different usages of "the Jews" in John are: *ethnic*, *geographical*,[465] *role*, and *religious*.[466] The *ethnic* usage refers to those of Jewish birth as distinct from other ethnic groups.[467] Examples of this would be John 4:9 and 4:22, where "the Jews" are distinguished as different from Samaritans or 18:35,

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[462] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 160.

[463] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 160. Brown uses the following points to back this statement. The Jewish Scriptures testify on behalf of Jesus (5:39); Abraham rejoiced at the prospect of seeing Jesus' day (8:56); Jesus is hailed as the King of Israel (1:49); and John identifies Jesus with a number of figures featured in OT.

[464] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 161.

[465] Brown distinguishes this from a political designation.

[466] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 160–164.

[467] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 161.

where "the Jews" are set in contrast to the Romans.[468] The *geographical* usage of "the Jews" describes those from or in the province of Judea.

Brown defines the *role* usage as being "Jewish (largely Jerusalem) authorities, including Temple chief priests (10 times in John), Pharisees (19 times), and Sanhedrin members."[469] Attached to this definition is a footnote, where Brown explains how the translation of "the Jews" as authorities "removes offense—the motive of many of its advocates."[470] Brown should know; recall in 1960, his standard definition for "the Jews" was "Jerusalem authorities." He has wrestled with this definition in almost every work he has written on John. In fact, in another footnote Brown explains how he "did not wrestle with this issue sufficiently in his first edition (*The Gospel According to John 1–XII*)." [471] Correcting that mistake by examining this issue in detail here, Brown evaluates the different passages that favor the interpretation of "the Jews" as authorities.[472] However, in spite of the evidence that favors such a reading, Brown says, "One must ask why John would use the designation 'the Jews,' which in itself has no implication of 'authorities' if he was thinking only of the authorities."[473] Recalling his own argument from 1966, Brown suggests:

> One could argue that the generalizing term was substituted because by the time John was written precision about different types of authorities had lost relevance…Only the chief priests and the Pharisees remain in John."[474]

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[468] While Brown sets up the category almost for the purpose of having a term to distinguish the Jews as people group defined by race, there does not seem to be an instance where there is an ethnic sense implied separate from a religious sense. In other words, while there might be instances where a religious sense does not suppose an ethnic sense, in the context of the Gospel, there is almost never a time when the ethnic sense does not imply the religious as well.

[469] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 161.

[470] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 163, n.35.

[471] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 164 n.37.

[472] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 163–4. Brown discusses how in the Synoptics, roles given to the various authority groups are attributed to "the Jews" in John. He also explains how in John 9:15–8, the Pharisees seem to be interchangeable with "the Jews."

[473] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 164.

[474] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 164.

However, Brown's own 1966 reasoning has changed, and he combats his earlier argument by saying:

> But if the more varied Jewish situation of Jesus' time no longer was significant when John was written, one can still ask why John chose such an ambiguous term as "Jews" that in itself does not distinguish Jesus the Jew from his opponents, instead of consistently employing "the authorities" (archontes) which this Gospel uses four times elsewhere.[475]

Consistent with his opinion in *Death of the Messiah,* after refuting his early arguments from the 1960s, Brown states:

> To translate some instances of *Ioudaioi* as "the Jewish authorities" and other instances as "Jewish people" or "the Jewish crowd" is unwarranted to clarify texts that John has left vague and cloaks the fact that by calling them both "the Jews," John deliberately joins them together in their hostility to Jesus.[476]

In the end, Brown believes that it was the intent of the Fourth Evangelist to use "the Jews" to implicate both the authorities and the people (Jewish people who did not accept Jesus). Thus to attempt to decipher the specific group with historical accuracy goes against the intent of the author who has deliberately and specifically implicated the enemy of Jesus in the Gospel story. To lend clarity to what Brown is really doing with this *role* classification, he uses this term to account for instances in the Gospel where οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι does not translate to "the Jews" well, but occupies a role that another specific group would play (i.e., the role of the authorities in the Gospel story).

The last of Brown's four categories is *religious* usage. This refers to, "those of Jewish birth who refused to believe in Jesus, spurned arguments proposed to support his divine identity, and were hostile to him and his followers (in the Johannine community) even to the point of killing."[477] Regardless of whether they are the crowds, pilgrims, or

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[475] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 165. Brown goes on to argue that there are many places where the opponents of Jesus are still called Ioudaioi and yet there is no reason to think it is meant to mean authorities.

[476] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 165–6.

[477] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 166.

authorities, "they have in common the religious rejection of Jesus as God's unique Son."[478]

After moving through the different classifications and possibilities for the usages of *Ioudaioi*,[479] Brown states that "*Ioudaioi* rendered as "the Jews" without substitutions (Judeans, Judaists) or explanatory, ameliorating additions (Jewish Authorities) communicates what John intended. Only "the Jews" catches the import of the designation on John's intended readers."[480] Brown cites John Ashton who argues that the Fourth Evangelist intended for "the Jews" to mean the entire Jewish people. Ashton states, "So it is not just the Pharisees that attract his [the Evangelist's] ire and resentment: it is the Jewish people as a whole who are made the symbol of the human shadow."[481] Brown assents to this by saying, "Uncomfortable as it may make modern readers because of the horrible history of anti-Jewish persecution in subsequent centuries, it is what John meant."[482] Reiterating his 1966 position, Brown states, "For John, the hostile 'Jews' of the evangelist's time are the heirs of the hostile Jewish authorities and crowds in Jesus time."[483]

Brown continues with an explanation for oddly negative use of "the Jews" on the lips of those who were also Jewish by birth. He states that this situation "indicates the deep alienation that the Johannine community felt from their ancestral people."[484] Brown raises the issue that even though there is obvious hostility between the Johannine Jesus and "the Jews," there are some scholars who question whether one may appropriately call this anti-Jewish.[485] Explaining their reservation Brown states:

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[478] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 166.

[479] Brown uses the English transliteration here rather than the Greek.

[480] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 166.

[481] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 166.

[482] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 167.

[483] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 167. While he has already explained this, here Brown utilizes his earlier interpretation that John has deliberately grouped authorities with the populace when writing "the Jews."

[484] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 167.

[485] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 167.

> They contend that we are hearing a dispute between one group of Jews and another and therefore "anti-Jewish" is no more appropriate here than if applied to hostility between Qumran Essenes and the Jerusalem high-priestly family.[486]

Brown disagrees. He agrees this might have been the situation in the beginning, but the situation changed. He states, "I know of no evidence that in their various intramural hostilities that the Pharisees, the Essenes, and the Sadducees… ever spoke of their enemies as 'the Jews.'"[487] Brown suggests:

> The Johannine community seems to have regarded expulsion from the synagogue as meaning that they could no longer look on themselves as Jews. Thus, John can be described as anti-Jewish in a qualified sense because through Jesus' words, it attacks those who it calls 'the Jews,' from which the (Johannine) disciples of Jesus differ religiously, not necessarily ethnically or geographically. And even the religious difference is narrowly restricted: The Johannine Christians and "the Jews" do not differ in venerating the Scriptures and the Jewish religious heritage but in their estimation of Jesus.[488]

This is similar to Brown's work, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* where he interprets the dispute between the Jews and the Johannine community as being centered upon determining the will of their common God. It is their estimation of Jesus that separates them, but they worship the same God.

In another point of revision, Brown updates his earlier (1966 and 1979) opinion regarding the link between the expulsion from the synagogue and *Birkat ha-mînîm*. Brown states:

> I have spoken of expulsion from the synagogue because that is the way John describes it. It would not be surprising if the synagogue authorities looked on that secession—voluntary to the extent that if the offenders had modified their divine claims about Jesus they could have remained affiliated with the synagogue.[489]

In defense of the synagogue authorities, Brown reminds his reader that the passages that speak of expulsion from the synagogue may be a matter of Johannine perspective. Brown

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[486] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 169.

[487] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 169.

[488] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 169.

[489] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 170.

has, in effect, lessened the potential hostility and reevaluated the overall conflict as having two potentially reasonable sides, instead of the one-sided perception that the Johannine community was mercilessly persecuted by the synagogue authorities.

There are two things that Brown does in this publication that he has not done in years past. First, he includes a separate section that addresses the Johannine apologetic against Jewish believers in Jesus who did not confess their faith publicly. After a rapid but detailed discussion,[490] Brown ultimately says, "Weighing this evidence, I would allow at least a likelihood that an appeal to the Jewish crypto-Christians was a minor purpose of the Gospel."[491] In his detailed analysis of the Jewish question at this time, Brown is addressing more aspects of John's apology to "the Jews" than he has in any of his previous writing, displaying a heightened active sensitivity to the overall issue.

The second thing that Brown does here is address the use of quotation marks when referring to "the Jews" in John. While Brown began employing this practice in 1966, he has not discussed it in any of his previous works. His discussion here suggests pedagogical intent in the use of proper terminology. He states:

> In order to alert hearers/readers to John's peculiar understanding and that he is not thinking of all those who in the first century were Jews by birth, in commenting on hostile passages I have written "the Jews" with quotations marks. I would maintain strongly that, although the designation "the Jews" should not be eliminated if one wishes to understand John's mentality, it should be carefully explained.[492]

Moving on to directly combat potential anti-Judaism that can occur because of the Fourth Gospel, Brown places responsibility upon those who preach on John to properly educate the recipients of their preaching:

> Today, therefore, in proclaiming John preachers must be careful to caution hearers that John's passages cannot be used to justify and ongoing hostility to

[490] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 173.

[491] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 174–175.

[492] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 167.

> Jewish people… Regarding the Bible as sacred does not mean that everything described therein is laudable.[493]

Keeping with his earlier conviction that modern anti-Judaism can in part be rooted to the improper import of hostile sentiment out of a biblical context into the present, Brown urges proper constraints regarding prescribed behavior based on biblical models. As in the past, Brown calls for caution and responsibility in biblical interpretation, especially by those who interpret the Bible for others.

In conclusion, Brown saw John as predominantly employing "the Jews" in a *religious* usage. In Brown's defined categories this means that they are those of Jewish birth who were opposed to Jesus and his followers in the Johannine community. Brown believes that the dispute between the Johannine community and "the Jews" began as an intra-Jewish debate, however the situation changed where the groups grew apart and began to think of the opposing group as "other." In the end, neither the Johannine Jews nor "the Jews" thought of the Johannine Jews as Jews. Thus, Brown does believe that in the later years when the Gospel of John was written, it was, in fact, anti-Jewish because it was opposed to real Jews and thought of them as another group.

Brown does not see any translation other than "the Jews" as appropriate for οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. In regard to the historicity of the Gospel and the "Jews," Brown states plainly that a literal sense for this Gospel is not what happened in the time of Jesus, but what happened in the Johannine community. As he suggested to some degree even in his original Anchor Bible Commentary, Brown sees the language and much of the experience depicted in the Gospel of John as being historically located during the time of the Johannine community, not in the time of Jesus.

In regard to Brown's own perceptions, his sensitivity in this work is similar to *Death of the Messiah*. He is clearly concerned with anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John, suggesting not only that this very Jewish Gospel is in fact anti-Jewish, but consciously revising his 1966 work in such a way that this appears to be his greatest change. He has attempted to make understandable both the persecution of Jesus and the persecution of the Johannine community. For Brown, while neither side is without fault, neither side should bear the overall guilt, as the situation was mutually hostile. Specifically new to

[493] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 168.

this publication are Brown's categories, his explanation of quotation marks when discussing John's Jews, and his section dedicated to "the Jews" who believe in Jesus yet remain in the Synagogue.

Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean (1997)

The final work that will be evaluated in this project called *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*. In 1996, Pope John Paul II appointed Raymond Brown to the Pontifical Biblical Commission for his second term.[494] During a meeting of the commission in April 1997, Brown was given two assignments that would later contribute to the document, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*. This document was released after Brown's death on May 24, 2001.

We are grateful to have had access[495] to the unpublished papers containing Brown's work on the two assignments, one on post-exilic Judaism (for the purpose of putting Jewish relations in the New Testament into context) and one on diverse points of view on the Jews in the Gospel of John. Much of the material in the first document can be found verbatim in the introductory material of Brown's *Introduction to the New Testament.*[496] The second assignment, an analysis of "the Jews" in the Gospel of John is what we will examine here. This information is of particular value because it can be considered Brown's final word on this topic of anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John; and it is organized in such a way so as to clearly give his opinion on the various issues in a matter of eight pages.

While there is almost no noticeable development in Brown's interpretation that is different from his previous publications, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean* does two things for this project. First, it allows us to see the endpoint of Brown's assessments on "the Jews" in John and trace back his final ideas to their points of origin. Second, it allows us to see exactly how much Brown contributed to the Pontifical Biblical Commission's (hereafter PBC) document, and how his information was combined with

[494] His first term was in 1968 when he was appointed by Pope Paul VI.

[495] Courtesy of the Raymond Brown Archives housed at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore.

[496] Brown, *Introduction to the New Testament,* 59–61; 75–84.

others to form the final document. This material is organized into five sections: "Preliminaries," "Overall Observations about the Use of "Jews" in John,"[497] "Why is There an AntiJewish Attitude in Johannine Thought?," "Summary of the Development," and "Pastoral Implications."

The "Preliminaries" section explains why there is a need to discuss "the Jews" in the Gospel of John. Brown very quickly discusses basic introductory issues related both to the Gospel in general and its author. He states, "There is little reason to doubt that the Evangelist was a Jew and that the basic context for the development of the Gospel was in relation to Judaism and the rejection of Jesus by some Jews." When he closes this section, Brown explains why with John, we are not dealing with Pagan "anti-Judaism" or "anti-Semitism." He says:

> Although there are hostile statements in relation to Jews in GJ, they involve only the acceptance or rejection of Jesus as the revealer of God whose word must be accepted. There is none of the antijudaism of the Pagan or Gentile word that involved hostility toward Jews because of Jewish separatism or clannishness or strange customs (refusal to eat certain foods, circumcision). A fortiori nowhere in John (or elsewhere in the NT are we dealing with anti-Semitism in the sense that word has had in the last two centuries with the development of the national states and of the bizarre theories that would classify Jews as different racially.[498]

As Brown has stated before in other works, the conflict in the Gospel of John is not over Law or practice, but acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah.

In the next section, "Overall Observations about the Use of 'Jews' in John," Brown discusses the different possible meanings for the Johannine use of "the Jews." He first did this in 1966. He explains that sometimes, "'Jews' simply means those who are of Jewish birth as distinct from Samaritans or Gentiles (4:9; 18:35)."[499] However, very few passages are affected by this usage. In these passages, "Jew(s)" is not used with any sort of hostility. When Brown discusses the hostile uses of the term "the Jews," he suggests that a regional distinction is not feasible. He states:

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[497] For this section Brown cites P. Grelot, *Les Juifs dans l'Évangile de Jean*, (Paris: Gabalda, 1995), as having been very helpful.

[498] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 13–14.

[499] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15.

> Some have tried to claim that the hostile references in GJ to "the Jews" means the Judeans (rather than Galileans), and so the evangelist is critical only of Judeans not of Jews. I agree with Grelot (p.47) that this explanation simply does not help for most passages. Much of Jesus' ministry in GJ is in Judea, and it is for that reason many of his fellow Jews with whom he as confrontations are in fact Judeans. But when he is in Galilee, there are hostile "Jews" there as well (6:41, 52); and it is Galileans whom Jesus chastises for not believing unless they see signs and wonders (4:48)… The light came "to his own and his own did not accept him" (1:11)—a passage that scarcely allows a distinction between Judeans and Galileans.[500]

This is consistent with Brown's previous opinions as he has never before interpreted John's hostile use of "the Jews" as "Judeans." Nor has he previously equated "the Jews" with the world. However, he has never expounded upon this issue to the extent that he has in this document. Here he states:

> Some would identify "the Jews" and "the world." I do not think that respects Johannine nuance. The relation of one to the other is comparable to that of a part to a whole… In 1:10–11: He was in the world, and the world was not made by him; yet the world did not recognize him. To his own he came; yet his own did not accept him…in the overall course of the Gospel both "the world" and "the Jews" come to mean those (human beings in general or people of Jewish birth) who reject Jesus. The world is the wider term: If *we* reject Jesus, for John we would be part of the world but would not be "the Jews."[501]

Brown does not give much explanation here as to how "the Jews" and "the world" are different except that John seems to distinguish them as two separate entities; both in opposition to Jesus. What Brown has clarified with these two passages are his beliefs that 1) John's hostile usage of "the Jews" in John cannot be equated with "Judeans," and 2) they cannot be equated with "the world." John has created a separate entity with "the Jews." What Brown is doing with this section is systematically addressing some of the strategies others have used to avoid anti-Judaism in John when they suggest that when John said "the Jews" he did not really mean Jews. He continues, next addressing the claim that "the Jews" really means Jewish authorities. Brown states,

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[500] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15.

[501] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15–16.

> A particular problem is presented by the claim that "the Jews" in GJ means the Jewish authorities or the Jerusalem authorities (the chief priests, Sanhedrin members, and sometimes the Pharisees). The main argument is that GJ sometimes (particularly in the passion account) uses "the Jews" where the Synoptic Gospels speak of specific authorities. That is true in some passages… Yet such an observation does not cover many passages and does not account for the overall effect.[502]

Brown himself defined "the Jews" as the Jerusalem authorities in his 1960 publication. In his later publications, his definition of "the Jews" fluctuated, sometimes they were just the authorities and sometimes they were a larger group, those of Jewish birth who were hostile to Jesus. What he states clearly in this passage is what he seemed to discover through his earlier publications, which is that sometimes "the Jews" are just the authorities, but there are contexts where authorities does not fit, and explanation must be made for those instances. Continuing to discuss John's use of "the Jews," Brown states,

> An appeal to the historical situation in AD 28–30 (33) does not solve the problem for our purposes. Historically, only some of Jesus' fellow Jews were hostile to him, only a relatively small number would have been responsible for handing him over to the Romans, and even a smaller number would have wanted his death (perhaps for religious reasons that seemed imperative to them). But GJ has generalized, so that "the Jews" want to kill Jesus…As one reads the Gospel, this usage has the effect of extending to the Jews in general the historical hostility felt towards the Jewish authorities of Jesus' lifetime. I see no justification for saying that this procedure was accidental.[503]

This is a position that Brown has held since 1975: the Evangelist was deliberate in his intent to spread hostility to the Jews, and the historical situation of Jesus ministry does not help the interpretive issues because the author of John was writing decades later. Brown moves on to address those who would substitute "Jewish authorities" for John's use of "the Jews" (οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι) today. He states:

> Those who want to substitute "Jewish authorities" for "Jews" in translating John today are, in my judgment, trying to undo a generalization of "Jews" that the evangelist intended…something that I do not believe translators should be

[502] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 16.

[503] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 16–17.

> allowed to suppress, no matter how good their intentions and no matter how displeasing the evangelist's intention.[504]

This statement summarizes much in regard to Brown's "final" position on "the Jews" in John. First, Brown's opinion is that regardless of the historical situation, "Jewish authorities" is not a proper rendition of the author's intention when he used the term οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. Second, Brown is opposed to any sort of censorship. This is consistent with Brown's stated opinions since 1975. He instead has asserted that biblical passages should be conveyed just as they were written (with any and all hostile attitudes intact), and that churches should preach forcefully against the adoption similar hostile attitudes. Brown advocated an approach to biblical interpretation by laity where they scrutinize the biblical text and not assume that everything in the Bible is to be taken literally or prescriptively. This indicates that some of Brown's final opinions were formed as early as 1975.

In the next section, "Why Is There an AntiJewish Attitude in Johannine Thought," Brown discusses the historical situation behind the attitudes in the Gospel. He mentions the possibility of the Johannine community's expulsion from a synagogue. While Brown has never advocated the "expulsion from the synagogue" theory as hard fact, the language that he uses here suggests less confidence than in the past. He states:

> Expulsion from a/the synagogue is mentioned several times in relation to professing faith in Jesus (9:22, 12:42; 16:2), and so it is not unreasonable to judge that in the course of Johannine history Johannine Jews who believed in Jesus were ejected from a synagogue. They may have even undergone synagogue trials, for that would explain why Johannine thought is so prominently phrased in terms of testifying, witness, and debates over the texts of Scripture.[505]

In his posthumous work, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, Brown stated that understanding "the Jews" was vital to understanding the Gospel as a whole. He displays that belief again here as he ties some of the predominant themes in John (testifying, witness, and debates) to the tension with "the Jews." What is interesting is Brown's careful wording of the expulsion event. In previous writings, it was expulsion from *the* synagogue. Here Brown is careful to say that if an expulsion did indeed happen, it would

[504] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 17.

[505] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 17.

be from *a* synagogue(s). In other words, the expulsion described in John, even if historical, would not have been a universal policy, happening to all believers in Jesus in all synagogues, hence Brown's move away from "the synagogue." Furthermore, while Brown is clear that judging from John's repeated mention of expulsion, it is a historical possibility, his own phrasing leaves open the alternative possibility that this may not have actually occurred.

However, as Brown moves on, he discusses possible reasons why the Johannine believers might have incurred such hostility from "the Jews." He states:

> The central hostile issue is not violation of features of the Law (Sabbath, purity rules) but Jesus' making claims that are tantamount to an assertion of divinity, which required a punishment of death… We know of many legal differences among Jews in the 1st century AD (among Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes), but we do not have an example, (as far as I know) of where a legal difference caused one side to accuse the other of no longer being Jews. But given the primacy of "the Lord our God is one," what would observant Jews have made of other Jews who were calling Jesus "Lord and God" (20:28)…In ejecting such followers of Jesus from the synagogue, might they not have said to them that they were ditheists (worshipping two Gods) and therefore no longer Jews?[506]

While Brown has stated much of this before, his treatment here is clear and succinct. In addition, Brown's suggestion that charges of ditheism could have caused the hostility that led to the Johannine community's expulsion from a synagogue is new.[507] This explanation displays sensitivity to a Jewish concern that would have had genuine religious concerns over the claims by the Johannine community that Jesus is equal to God. Brown's suggestion is that such claims were, in fact, grounds for asserting that they could no longer be considered Jews. While Brown said earlier that there was no evidence of other Jewish groups accusing each other of no longer being Jews, the other Jewish groups did not make the claims that the Johannine community did. Brown suggests here

[506] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 17–18.

[507] See also Brown, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 62. He discusses how the assertions of the community might have been a threat to monotheism, but he does not go into the explanation that he does here. Also, in *Introduction to the New Testament*, he does not discuss this in relation to synagogue expulsion or the Gospel of John, but in the introductory material dealing with hostilities between Jews and Christians in the Gospels.

that these claims could have been extreme enough to warrant such a reaction, thus making the hostility of "the Jews" understandable.

Brown moves on to contextualize the sentiment of the Johannine community by stating:

> Plausibly such ejection from the synagogue over explicit proclamation of Jesus' divinity could explain the alienation that underlies the Johannine use of "the Jews." Even though many Johannine Christians (probably including the evangelist) were born Jews, apparently they no longer thought of themselves as or included themselves among "the Jews."[508]

While Brown displayed caution earlier regarding the theory of expulsion from a synagogue, it is still the primary theory he relies on to explain the Johannine community's hostility towards "the Jews." He also puts forth the theory that he first introduced in *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, which remains relatively unchanged here, that the hostile use of the term "the Jews" originated with Samaritan members of Johannine community. While Brown does not comment on whether historically Jesus interacted with Samaritans, he does clearly suggest that the author's community did.

In the "Summary of Development" section, Brown does a quick historical reconstruction of historical events. He states:

> Disputes and hostilities existed in Jesus' ministry between him and some fellow Jews over implications of his ministry; finally Jewish authorities decided to turn him over to the Romans to be put to death.[509]

These events Brown attributes to the time of Jesus' ministry. This is consistent with Brown's thought as far back as 1966 and 1970. In both his Anchor Bible Commentaries, Brown asserted that historically there were hostilities between Jesus and certain Jews during his ministry. In 1970, Brown suggested that a crucifixion involving both Jewish authorities and Romans was most plausible. His biblical interpretation in this regard has not changed significantly in the last 27–30 years. Brown continues to explain how the events of Jesus time was formed into the Gospel story by stating:

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[508] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 18.

[509] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 19.

> These memories have been rephrased (consciously, unconsciously, or both) in the Johannine tradition and finally in GJ in light of the community's (and perhaps the evangelist's) experience.[510]

Brown then demonstrates how some events narrated in the Gospel are not from Jesus' time but are from the time of the Johannine community. He explains:

> GJ shows that Johannine Christians had explicated the relationship in terms of Jesus' status as God in an emphatic way. This… brought Johannine Christians into sharp conflict with synagogue leaders and other Jews who were disturbed by what seemed to them a serious departure from the monotheistic principle of Judaism. The Johannine Christians were…expelled from the synagogue… causing them to feel alienated from Jewish practice and fellowship, so that they could speak of those who criticized them simply as "the Jews" (without reflection on the majority of Jews in the 1st-century world who had never even heard of Jesus).[511]

The explanation that John imported the term "the Jews" into the Gospel story from his time period is something that Brown has asserted since 1966. Brown's reconstruction of events from the time of Jesus to the time of the Gospel's composition goes back to his 1979 work, *Community of the Beloved Disciple.* Neither work, however, mentioned any "lack of reflection" on the part of the Johannine author as he wrote about "the Jews." It is evident in Brown's 1998 work, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, when Brown issues his apologies on behalf of the author of John. Recall in that work he states:

> Quite frankly I never gave thought to Jews (or others) who had never heard of Jesus or Jews of future generations and I sincerely regret that my words were applied to them.[512]

It is the evaluation of John's carelessness (in his usage of "the Jews") discussed in this PBC document that was later expressed as an apology in *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*.[513]

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[510] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 19.

[511] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 19.

[512] Brown. *A Retreat with John the Evangelist,* 70–71.

[513] *A Retreat with John the Evangelist* (1998) was actually published after this Pontifical Biblical Commission document. (1997). The reason it is organized in this way here is because this document was never completed for publication before Brown died, thus, it is a posthumous document. The official document was released in 2002.

John 16:2 states, "They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so they are offering worship to God." Recall that in *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, contrary to Louis Martyn, Brown expressed his own theory that this verse came about not because the synagogues were actually putting people to death, but in their excommunication of the Johannine Christians, the effect might have still resulted in the death of Christians. Brown has kept this same opinion here saying, "They regarded expulsion as persecution and even as an attempt to put them to death."[514] However, his caution regarding the entire expulsion theory can be seen again here. Brown states:

> It is difficult to interpret the latter charge; if it had a basis in fact (and was not simply a polemic exaggeration), a benevolent interpretation would be that, having been rejected by a synagogue, Christians were left without a public status that gave them the right to assemble and be exempted from civil worship such as they had formerly possessed as Jews—in other words opened them to harassment by Gentile officials.[515]

The general theory goes back to 1979 with *Community of the Beloved Disciple*, although there he specifically defines the "Gentile officials" as Romans. The cautions expressed here are new and are consistent with the research in recent years that has called the *Birkat Ha-Mînîm* and synagogue expulsion theories into question. Much of Brown's understanding of the Gospel began with these theories and dialogue with Louis Martyn in the 1970s, and although Brown demonstrates a recognition that these issues have come into question, in 1997, his own discussion of the polemic in John still revolves around them.

In the last section, "Pastoral Implications," Brown addresses the gap between historical analysis and pastoral problems by saying:

> In my judgment, it is impossible to deny that there are very hostile statements to or about (the) Jews in GJ. The fact that they are obvious generalizations that go beyond Jesus' lifetime and that historically Jesus did not speak about "the Jews"

[514] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 19.

[515] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 19.

> in this way or alienate himself from his fellow Jews does not really solve the pastoral problem.[516]

He moves on to address why this is the case, and he offers pastoral solutions to this problem. Brown explains:

> As they read or hear GJ today, people find Jesus speaking in this hostile way. As I stated, I do not think we are authorized to change the biblical text. One solution at least, is to explain to people how the enmity developed. It was not inherent in the Christian message; it developed because of bitter disputes between (Jewish) believers in Jesus and Jews who did not believe in Jesus. The enmity increased after the NT period as relations between believers in Jesus and Jews became more antagonistic. If Christians and Jews today can be brought to see the results of hostile relations in the 1st century, this can help them not only to interpret their sacred ancient documents in the atmosphere in which they were written but also to see the harm that can be produced by continued hostile relations. Not everything recounted in Scripture is to be emulated.[517]

Brown's direct handling of potential anti-Jewish sentiment is consistent with how he has handled this issue since 1975. His opinion that understanding NT hostility can curb similar sentiment in the present was displayed in *Death of the Messiah* (1994) and *A Retreat with John the Evangelist* (1998). As this project has shown, two of the places where Brown demonstrated a notable increase in his sensitivity to potential anti-Judaism were his 1975 essay and his last work *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*.[518] Both works were geared to a Church audience, and in both he cautioned against excising passages while imploring his readers not to adopt anti-Jewish attitudes from the text. While he discussed historical critical issues in the Gospel of John in both these works, he still went beyond this in his didactic approach to combating potential anti-Judaism, arguably more so in these pastoral writings than in his larger books geared to more academically oriented audiences.[519]

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[516] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 20.

[517] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 21.

[518] *Death of the Messiah* displayed the pinnacle of his anti-Jewish awareness, but it was displayed more assertively in *A Retreat with John the Evangelist.*

[519] While it is true that Brown actively addressed hostile attitudes in the text in every work after 1975 (with the exception of his 1988 reprint of his brief 1960 commentary), those were larger works. The 1975 essay (8 pages) and *Retreat With John the Evangelist* (102 pages) are striking because in such limited

Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean, one of two assignments given to Brown for contribution to the Pontifical Biblical Commission's document, "The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible," is Brown's last stated opinion on "the Jews" in John. It does three things for this project. First, because of the clear and concise nature in which Brown stated his opinions in this work, this assignment explicitly addresses Brown's final opinion on the various points of interpretation regarding "the Jews" in John. Many points that in other publications were gleaned through context and longer statements, Brown has clearly addressed here. Secondly, this work gives us the benefit of hindsight in viewing Brown's earlier statements through the years. Because of this endpoint, we are able to go back in history and pinpoint vital places where Brown's understanding on various issues of interpretation were changed or clarified into what would remain his final opinion, a vantage point available only at the very end. What we found is that many of Brown's final opinions that were stated in 1998 were formed as early as 1975. Finally, this document gives us unique insight into Brown's own contribution to Catholic statements regarding the Jews. While Brown died before the final PBC statement was released, and thus it is unknown what his revised or ultimate contribution to this document might have been, the work displayed here was still incorporated into final PBC document. It is possible to see what part of the final document came directly from Brown, and what modifications and additions were made to Brown's work. This next section will explore this.

The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible

As we discuss various sections of the final PBC document, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, Brown's specific contributions to the various sections will be denoted by underline. Much of the section of *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, that Brown was assigned is background information regarding "the Jews" in the Gospel of John. In some places, Brown's contribution can be seen as the historical element of a theological statement. For example:

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space, Brown makes some of his most assertive comments, demonstrating clear intent to communicate and instruct.

> About the Jews, the Fourth Gospel has a very positive statement, made by Jesus himself in the dialogue with the Samaritan woman: "Salvation comes from the Jews" (Jn 4:22).[520] Elsewhere, to the statement of the High Priest Caiaphas who said that it was "advantageous" "to have one man die for the people", the evangelist sees a meaning in the word inspired by God and emphasises (sic) that "Jesus was about to die for the nation", adding "not for the nation only, but to gather into one the dispersed children of God" (Jn 11:49-52). The evangelist betrays a vast knowledge of Judaism, its feasts, its Scriptures. The value of the Jewish patrimony is clearly acknowledged: Abraham saw Jesus' day and was glad (8:56);[521] the Law is a gift given through Moses as intermediary (1:17); "the Scripture cannot be annulled" (10:35); Jesus is the one "about whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote" (1:45); he is "a Jew" (4:9) and "King of Israel" (1:49) or "King of the Jews" (19:19-22). There is no serious reason to doubt that the evangelist was Jewish and that the basic context for the composition of the Gospel was relations with the Jews.[522]

This section demonstrates some of the confessional aspects of what this Gospel means to the Catholic Church. Brown lends to this overall document the credibility of a faithful Catholic historian who is able to comment on the probable situation behind the Gospel writer. When discussing to whom the term "the Jews" refers, this document relies heavily on Brown's expertise. It says:

> By translating "the Jews" as "the Judeans",[523] an attempt has been made to eliminate the tensions that the Fourth Gospel can provoke between Christians and Jews. The contrast then would not be between the Jews and Jesus' disciples, but between the inhabitants of Judea,[524] presented as hostile to Jesus, and those of Galilee, presented as flocking to their prophet. Contempt by Judeans for Galileans is certainly expressed in the Gospel (7:52), but the evangelist did not draw the lines of demarcation between faith and refusal to believe along geographical lines, he distinguishes Galilean Jews who reject Jesus' teaching as hoi Ioudaioi (6:41,52).[525] Another interpretation of "the Jews" identifies them with "the world" based on affirmations which express a comparison (8:23) or parallelism between

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[520] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15.

[521] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 14.

[522] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, 24 May 2001, 76.

[523] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15.

[524] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15.

[525] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15.

> them. But the world of sinners, by all accounts, extends beyond Jews who are hostile to Jesus.[526] It has also been noted that in many Gospel passages "the Jews" referred to are the Jewish authorities (chief priests, members of the Sanhedrin) or sometimes the Pharisees.[527] A comparison between 18:3 and 18:12 points in this direction. In the passion narrative, John frequently mentions "the Jews" where the Synoptics speak of Jewish authorities.[528] But this observation holds good only for a certain restricted number of passages and such precision cannot be introduced into a translation of the Gospel without being unfaithful to the text. These are echoes of opposition to Christian communities, not only on the part of the Jewish authorities, but from the vast majority of Jews, in solidarity with their leaders (cf. Ac 28:22).[529]

We have seen all of this historical information regarding John's use of "the Jews" in Brown's earlier works. What is fascinating is to see Brown's historical critical biblical interpretation now affecting Catholic statements on "the Jews." In fact, the one benefit of having Brown's unfinished writings that contributed to this PBC document is that we can see where the final document actually tempers Brown's cautious statements regarding potential anti-Judaism.

As Brown explains why "the Jews" cannot be considered the Jewish authorities, he explains (as he has in his other later works) that to substitute Jewish authorities for "the Jews" "does not cover many passages and does not account for the overall affect."[530] The PBC document captures this to some degree. Brown's concern is that the substitution of Jewish authorities for "the Jews" is an effort to deny that potential anti-Judaism exists in the Gospel of John. For him, the substitution of terms does not address the deliberate hostility that the Gospel writer had towards "the Jews." In *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, Brown says:

> As one reads the extant Gospel, this usage has the effect of extending to the Jews in general the historical hostility felt towards the Jewish authorities of Jesus' lifetime. I see no justification for saying that this procedure was accidental. Those

[526] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 15.

[527] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 16.

[528] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 16.

[529] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, 24 May 2001, 77.

[530] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 16.

> who want to substitute "Jewish authorities" for "Jews" in translating John today are in my judgment, trying to undo a generalization of "Jews" that the evangelist intended … something I do not believe translators should be allowed to suppress, no matter how good their intentions and no matter how displeasing the evangelist's intention.[531]

This however is not the sense of the final PBC document as it appropriates Brown's analysis. As the PBC document discusses the unfaithful rendering of authorities for "the Jews," it not only speaks of opposition by Jewish leaders towards the early Christian communities, it stresses that it was more than just the leaders, but the vast majority of Jews with their leaders. The PBC document does not mention any concerns of anti-Jewish sentiment, nor does it use Brown's material that discusses deliberate hostile intent of the author.

Further on in the same PBC passage is another similar instance. The PBC document states:

> Historically, it can be said that only a minority of Jews contemporaneous with Jesus were hostile to him, that a smaller number were responsible for handing him over to the Roman authorities; and that fewer still wanted him killed, undoubtedly for religious reasons that seemed important to them.[532] But these succeeded in provoking a general demonstration in favour of Barabbas and against Jesus, which permitted the evangelist to use a general expression, anticipating a later evolution.[533]

The underlined portion, which is taken from Brown's document, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, argues that historically only a few Jews were hostile to Jesus and wanted his death. Further on in Brown's document, Brown goes on to say that despite the historical situation, "GJ has generalized so that "the Jews" want to kill Jesus."[534] The PBC document chose to modify the rest of Brown's explanation. It has further incriminated those few Jews to whom Brown attributes the hostility and handing over of Jesus, and even goes further by suggesting that they were able to gather others to favor

[531] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 16–17.

[532] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 16–17.

[533] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, 24 May 2001, 77.

[534] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 17.

Barabbas and oppose Jesus. It then completes the utilization of Brown's explanation demonstrating how the Evangelist came to use the term "the Jews." When one looks at the PBC document as a whole, it seems to demonstrate a sensitivity towards anti-Judaism. It is interesting, however, that these places are Brown's contribution; when looking at Brown's input separately, it appears that the PBC has actually lessened the displayed concern towards potential anti-Judaism. This can be seen again when the document utilizes Brown's explanation of how the Johannine communities' assertion of faith in Jesus could have been seen as unfaithful to monotheism. The PBC document states:

> It is possible that the Jews in the Johannine communities experienced this treatment, since they would be considered unfaithful to Jewish monotheistic faith[535] (which, in fact, was not at all the case, since Jesus said: "I and the Father are one": 10:30). The result was that it became almost standard to use "the Jews" to designate those who kept this name for themselves alone, in their opposition to the Christian faith.[536]

Interestingly enough, in Brown's document, He uses "I and the Father are one," to demonstrate why "the Jews" would have thought of the Johannine community as ditheists. He states:

> But given the primacy of "the Lord our God is one, " what would observant Jews have made of other Jews who were calling Jesus "Lord and God" (20:28)…In ejecting such followers of Jesus from the synagogue, might they not have said to them that they were ditheists?[537]

As Brown discusses this, it is for the purpose of engendering understanding for the Jewish perspective, lessening potential anti-Judaism. As the PBC modifies Brown's statements, it actually uses Brown's words to communicate the opposite, that once again the Jewish viewpoint has misunderstood Jesus. Another subtle point is that as Brown in describes the Johannine use of "the Jews" in *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean* he states, "although many Johannine Christians (probably including the evangelist) were

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[535] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 17.

[536] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, 24 May 2001, 77.

[537] Brown, *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*, 17.

born Jews, apparently they *no longer thought of themselves* among "the Jews." The implication is that they have relinquished the title "Jew." The hostile use of the term is because they now thought of the Jews as "other." The PBC passage states that the term "the Jews" was kept exclusively by those opposed to the Christian faith. The implication is that "the Jews" chose their own title, thus, suggesting that John's hostile use the term okay because it was self-designated by those to whom it refers.

The purpose here is not to suggest that the Pontifical Biblical Commission is anti-Jewish. On the contrary, Brown was appointed to this commission, and they utilized his work. Instead, the aim is to demonstrate the impact that Raymond Brown had on this PBC document and, thus, overall Catholic policy. It is Brown's research and stated opinions that the PBC uses to ground their arguments in the historical background of the Gospel. Furthermore, it is Brown's contribution that makes the overall document as sensitive to the Jewish concern as it is. *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean* has given us the opportunity to evaluate the impact of one Catholic biblical scholar on the formation of official Catholic statements towards the Jews.

In closing this section, the PBC document states regarding anti-Judaism:

> It has been noted with good reason that much of the Fourth Gospel anticipates the trial of Jesus and gives him the opportunity to defend himself and accuse his accusers. These are often called "the Jews" without further precision, with the result that an unfavourable judgement is associated with that name. *But there is no question here of anti-Jewish sentiment, since*[538]—as we have already noted—the Gospel recognizes that "salvation comes from the Jews" (4:22). This manner of speaking only reflects the clear separation that existed between the Christian and Jewish communities.[539]

Nothing in this passage comes directly from Brown. The document asserts that the Fourth Gospel is not anti-Jewish. Interestingly enough, Brown himself used this same strategy in 1966 when he used 4:22 to balance the hostility in John 8.[540] By the time Brown revises his 1966 commentary with the posthumous publication, *An Introduction to the Gospel of*

[538] Emphasis mine.

[539] Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, 24 May 2001, 76.

[540] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 368.

John, he asserts that the Gospel is anti-Jewish in a qualified sense because it is opposed to Jews, "through Jesus' words, it attacks those who it calls 'the Jews,' from which the (Johannine) disciples of Jesus differ religiously, not necessarily ethnically or geographically."[541] Thus, at the time this PBC document was released, Brown would have been in disagreement with the unqualified assertion that "there is no question of anti-Jewish sentiment." It would be interesting to know what the final PBC document would have looked like had Brown been alive when it was finally released in 2002.

[541] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 169.

CONCLUSION

RAYMOND BROWN IN THE CONTEXT OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP

We have evaluated Brown's awareness of potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John and discussed how interactions with certain scholars, Church statements, and personal experiences affected Brown's biblical interpretation. This project has demonstrated that Brown's awareness grew significantly between 1960 and 1998. To complete our overall evaluation we will set Raymond Brown's works in the context of biblical scholarship on the Gospel of John between the years 1955–2000. This chapter will examine two types of publications: major commentaries and works[542] on the Gospel of John as a whole (minimum 200 pages), and articles or book chapters dealing specifically with anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John. Two major publications that will not be included here because they were evaluated in conjunction with Brown's works in chapters one through four are C. H. Dodd's *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel* and *Historical Tradition of the Fourth Gospel* and J. Louis Martyn's *History and Theology of the Fourth Gospel*.

Major Commentaries/Works on the Gospel of John and Their Displayed Awareness of Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John

C. K. Barrett, writing in 1955, said in his commentary, that "the Jews" represented "Judaism and its leaders" whose headquarters were in Jerusalem.[543] In 1972 Barnabas Lindars argued that sometimes "the Jews" simply refers to Judeans and

[542] For example, Alan Culpepper's *The Gospel and Letters of John* does deal with the Gospel of John as a whole and is relevant for this discussion, but does not do a verse by verse analysis or handle every issue a regular commentary would.

[543] Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*, 143.

sometimes to the Judean ruling authorities.[544] Both Barrett and Lindars' historical analysis of "the Jews" in John is that can refer to the Jewish/Jerusalem authorities. Neither of them in 1955 or 1972 addressed potential anti-Judaism in the text as a modern ethical concern.

Rudolf Schnackenburg's[545] massive three-volume, 1965 commentary was made available in English in 1968. He addresses John's polemic against "the Jews" in the introductory subsection "Attitude to Judaism" in "Theological and Topical Interests." Regarding οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι he states:

> But the generalizing description of the leaders as οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι is remarkable, as is the relatively frequent mention of the Pharisees. The reason can hardly be lack of "historical" knowledge of the situation. But another suspicion springs to the mind: that the evangelist is guided by a certain judgment he has formed on Judaism. Historically speaking, the leaders are made responsible for the unbelief of the Jewish people and Jesus' failure among them (11:47–53), but at the same time this circle is to appear, theologically as the representatives of the unbelief and hatred of the "world" hostile to God.[546]

Here Schnackenburg distinguishes between what he thinks happened historically and what the author tried to communicate theologically. Like Bultmann, he sees "the Jews" as the representatives of unbelief. Commenting on the social situation behind the Gospel he states:

> They [οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι] continue to live as contemporaries of the evangelist in the unbelieving Judaism of his day which persecutes the disciples of Christ (cf. 16:1–4)…One may however suspect that when the evangelist is dealing with Jesus's debates with "the Jews" (cf. ch.8), which do not yet appear in the Synoptics as so sharp and continuous, he is also thinking of his own day and hence making them more "transparent and topical for his readers…Thus the presence of an anti-Jewish tendency in John, occasioned by the contemporary situation can hardly be doubted.[547]

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[544] Barnabas Linders, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 102: "John's usage [of the Jews] often means the people of the province of Judea; cf.11:45. Here he is referring more specifically to the ruling authorities."

[545] Schnackenburg like Brown is a Catholic scholar.

[546] Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of John*, 1:166.

[547] Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of John*, 1:166–67.

Very similar to Brown's 1966 work (regarding the import of language from the author's time into the story of Jesus), Schnackenburg asserts that historically the Fourth Evangelist was thinking of his own time when writing the Gospel narrative, thus accounting for some of the hostility towards "the Jews." While he does not display any concern over modern expressions of anti-Judaism, he actually uses the term "anti-Jewish" in relation to John's attitude. Brown did not do this until 1975.

Leon Morris' commentary for the NICNT series[548] was published in 1971. He also addresses John's polemic against "the Jews" in the introductory material. He states:

> Others have held that John is concerned to write a polemic against unbelieving Jews. The one strong point in favor of this is the way in which the term "the Jews" is used throughout the Gospel. Our Evangelist makes use of this expression far more often than does any of the others and he certainly cannot be said to be warmly disposed toward "the Jews."[549]

While Morris recognizes the modern concern regarding hostility towards "the Jews," and he places the term in quotes, he does not define here who "the Jews" are. He does expound further though when discussing John 1:19 stating:

> The inquisitors came from Jerusalem from "the Jews"…Sometimes the Evangelist employs it [the term "the Jews"] in a neutral sense (e.g. 2:6, "the Jews' manner of purifying"). He can even use it in a good sense (e.g. "salvation is from the Jews", 4:22). But much more often he uses it to denote the Jewish nation as hostile to Jesus. It does not necessarily denote the whole nation. In fact characteristically it means the Jews of Judea, especially those in and around Jerusalem…It is the aspect of hostility to Jesus that "the Jews" primarily signifies.[550]

Morris suggests that there are multiple uses of "the Jews" depending on context. He also concludes that while there are exceptions, most uses of "the Jews" are hostile and specifically refer to Jews around Judea and Jerusalem.[551] The last sentence of the passage

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[548] New International Commentary of the New Testament.

[549] Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 37. See also: Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 32.

[550] Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 130–131. See also: Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 115–116.

[551] Recall Brown and Schnackenburg who held similar opinions.

above suggests that the term "the Jews" is actually a theological category, representing the hostility itself, and not just a hostile group of people. This analysis is similar to Brown's 1966 opinion. While Morris does address the polemic against "the Jews" as an interpretive issue in the Gospel, he does not address potential anti-Judaism. This commentary was revised and reprinted in 1995. It is interesting to note however that in the revised edition, these passages remain exactly the same with no additional material addressing potential anti-Judaism added. This suggests that the growing concern regarding potential anti-Judaism that affected Brown's interpretation over the years was not something that affected Morris.

The revised version of William Barclay's two-volume commentary was published in 1975.[552] Barclay does not address John's polemic against "the Jews" at all in his introductory material. Like other commentaries we have evaluated, his first discussion of "the Jews" comes when discussing 1:19. Barclay states:

> The word *Jews* (*Ioudaioi*) occurs in this Gospel no fewer than seventy times; and always the Jews are the opposition. They are the people who have set themselves against Jesus…The Fourth Gospel is two things. First, as we have seen, it is the exhibition of God in Jesus Christ. But second, it is equally the story of the rejection of Jesus Christ by the Jews…[553]

Barclay does not make any distinctions between the historical situation and the theological message of the Gospel. Barclay links the Jewish rejection of Jesus to a rejection of God.

When commenting on John 8:46, Barclay states:

> Jesus indicted the Jews as children of the devil because their thoughts were bent on the destruction of the good and the maintaining of the false. Every man who tries to destroy the truth is doing the devil's work.[554]

Barclay continues:

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[552] William Barclay, *The Gospel of John* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 1:76. The original commentary was published in 1955.

[553] Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 1:76.

[554] Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 2:29.

> Jesus was saying to the Jews: "You have gone your own way and followed your own ideas; the Spirit of God has been unable to gain entry into your hearts; that is why you cannot recognize me and that is why you will not accept many words." The Jews believed they were religious people; but because they had clung to their idea of religion instead of to God's idea, they had in the end drifted so far from God that they had become godless. They were in the terrible position of men who were godlessly serving God.[555]

Barclay has stated that the Jews did not have the Spirit of God and they had become godless, practicing empty religion. In these passages Barclay does not distinguish John's use of the Jews (by means of quotes or specific definitions) as different from Jews in general, nor does he distinguish his own sentiments from the sentiments of the Fourth Evangelist. As a result, it becomes easy for the reader to make the equation between "the Jews" in John who are portrayed as godless by Barclay and modern Jews today.

In 1976, Robert Kysar[556] published *John: The Maverick Gospel*. In it he argues that:

> "The Jews" often refers to the religious authorities, to be sure, but the term also includes a wider class of opponents. The Jews are stylized types of those who reject Christ, and that usage illuminates this strange category. The specific ethnic characteristic is lost in the Fourth Gospel. The term no longer designates a religious body of persons, because the Fourth Evangelist has used it to make them simply a type, not specific persons.[557]

Kysar uses this as a strategy to navigate around anti-Judaism.[558] He argues:

> Hence, we must not conclude that she or he had an anti-Semitic motive in mind… Neither can we accuse our author of being anti-Semitic. The casting of characters is a strategy for telling the story…The casting of the Jews as the *symbol of*

[555] Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, 2:31.

[556] While what is displayed here is Kysar's 1976 opinion, it must be noted that like Brown, over the course of years, Kysar's awareness to potential anti-Judaism also grew. See: Robert Kysar, *Voyages With John,* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005).

[557] Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel,* 68. The inconsistent use of quotes around "the Jews" in some places

[558] Kysar actually uses the term anti-Semitism. He does not discuss the differences between anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. He does not indicate his understanding of the difference in the terms.

> *unbelief,*[559] we may conclude, was an accident of history, and a most tragic one at that![560]

Kysar concludes this line of thinking by saying:

> They [the Jews] are not an ethnic, geographical, national, or even religious group as much as a stereotype of rejection. *Any person who refuses to accept the human identity proposed by Christ in the Gospel is for the Evangelist a "Jew."*[561]

Kysar's historical analysis is that the term "the Jews" refers to the Jewish authorities. However Kysar addresses modern ethical concerns over anti-Judaism by arguing that the intent of the Fourth Evangelist was not anti-Semitic. He rationalizes that because John used "the Jews" as a type that can be used to describe anyone who rejects Jesus, the term no longer denotes real people and thus, John is not anti-Semitic.

While there is no direct address in Kysar's work that educates his readers against adopting hostile attitudes from the Gospel of John, his reference to John's use of "the Jews" as "a most tragic accident in history" displays awareness on Kysar's part that John has fostered hostile attitudes. Even in 1966, Brown included a small aside to instruct his readers that they cannot adopt hostile attitudes from the text. This instruction grew in his 1970 work (*The Gospel According to John XII–XXI*), and his 1975 article, demonstrating a heightened sensitivity displayed in Brown's writings, which is highlighted even more when compared to Kysar's 1976 work, and more especially to Barclay's 1975 work.

F. F. Bruce, released his commentary entitled, *The Gospel and Epistles of John* in 1983. In the preface he states its purpose: "The exposition of the Fourth Gospel… is intended chiefly for the general Christian reader who is interested in serious Bible study, not for the professional or specialist student."[562] There is no attention to potential anti-Judaism or polemic towards "the Jews" in his introductory material. The first place he addresses "the Jews" is when he comments on John 1:19 where the delegation from Jerusalem has been sent to John the Baptist:

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[559] Kysar's emphasis.

[560] Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel,* 68.

[561] Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel,* 69. Again, emphasis with italics is Kysar's.

[562] Bruce, *The Gospel and Epistles of John,* preface (n.p.).

> Here for the first time we come upon the use of the term "the Jews" in this Gospel to denote not the people as a whole but one particular group—here, the religious establishment in Jerusalem, occasionally used as in (John 7:1) to mean Judeans as distinct from the Galilaeans, while at other times it has quite a general meaning. Attention to the sense which the word bears in each place where it occurs could save the reader from supposing that the Evangelist (who was himself a Jew) had an animus against the Jews as such.[563]

Similar to Brown in 1966, Bruce has navigated away from potential anti-Judaism by arguing for multiple meanings for "the Jews" depending on context. Sometimes it means authorities, other times Judeans. He mentions a "general" meaning, but gives no explanation as to what that means. He has also implied intra-Jewish hostilities and has suggested that John is not anti-Jewish. However, Bruce does not caution his readers against adopting hostile attitudes in the text which Brown did aggressively in his 1975 article, also geared to the Church laity. Instead Bruce suggests that some substitution for the term "the Jews" depending on context will solve the anti-Jewish problem.

Ernst Haenchen's 1980 commentary[564] was translated into English from the German for the Hermeneia Commentary series in 1984.[565] Surprising for its time, this expansive two-volume commentary displays relatively no awareness of potential anti-Judaism. There is no mention of a polemic against the Jews in the introductory material; and even in John 1:19, a common place to explain "the Jews" since it is the first time the term appears in the Gospel, Haenchen makes no acknowledgement.

There are multiple places where Haenchen's own comments display a lack of sensitivity. When commenting on 8:28,[566] Haenchen says:

> To this Jesus responds as though they had said it to him: when they have lifted him up, therefore after Easter, they will know that he is the Son of man, namely

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[563] Bruce, *The Gospel and Epistles of John,* 46.

[564] Ernst Haenchen, *Das Johannesevangellium Ein Kommentar* (2 vols.; Tubingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1980).

[565] Ernst Haenchen, *Gospel of John* (eds. Robert W. Funk and Ulrich Busse; trans. Robert W. Funk; 2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984).

[566] So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will realize that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own, but I speak these things as the Father instructed me.

> when they suffer retribution in the destruction of Jerusalem. It will be clear that Jesus has not brought his own teaching, but that of the father.[567]

This is not the only time that Haenchen mentions the destruction of Jerusalem as punishment for the Jews. When commenting on 11:48, where the Sanhedrin fears Roman repercussion because of Jesus,[568] Haenchen states, "yet what the Sanhedrin fears will happen in the year 70."[569]

There are also places where Haenchen depicts the Jews as malicious and motivated only by power. In chapter nine, where Jesus heals the blind man and tensions with "the Jews" escalates, Haenchen states, "only malevolence can overlook this miraculous proof; but the Jews now do." Similarly when discussing the meeting of the Sanhedrin in chapter eleven after the raising of Lazarus, he comments, "The Jews and Caiaphas do not really act out of concern for the chosen people, but out of concern for their own power." It may be that these comments do not represent Haenchen's own opinions, but what he thinks represents the opinion of the evangelist. However, similar to Brown in 1960, because he does not clarify this or distance himself from the negative sentiment of the evangelist, the impression the reader gets is that this might be Haenchen's sentiment as well. Furthermore, because Haenchen does not discuss this in historical terms, his own interepretation of what happened historically during the time of the author or the time of Jesus is ambiguous. Haenchen's earlier comments, linking the destruction of the temple and the Jewish rejection of Jesus, combined with his commentary that uses words like "malevolence" in conjunction with the Jews,[570] display significant insensitivity to anti-Judaism. Even in 1960 when Brown displayed the least amount of awareness to anti-Judaism, he was still more sensitive than Haenchen in this 1980 work.

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[567] Haenchen, *Gospel of John*, 2:28.

[568] "If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation."

[569] Haenchen, *Gospel of John*, 2:77.

[570] Neither the English translation nor the German original of Haenchen's commentary places "the Jews" in quotes.

In 1987, George Beasley Murray published his commentary on John for the Word Biblical Commentary series. He addresses John's polemic against the Jews in an introductory section entitled "The Purpose of the Fourth Gospel." In it he states,

> Here we observe that when "the Jews" are spoken of in a pejorative manner, the term generally denotes the Jewish leaders (especially Pharisees) in their opposition to Jesus and his followers; because they have become the prime representatives of the (godless) world that stands in opposition to God.

Historically, "the Jews" are the Jewish authorities. Theologically, they come to represent the world and are those that stand in opposition to God. Even with this kind of explanation that equates "the Jews," not as those in opposition to Jesus, but to God, he does not specifically address anti-Judaism or anti-Semitism in the Gospel. Compared to Brown, who included at least a brief address to his reader regarding hostile attitudes in the text as far back as 1966, and more aggressively so by 1975, Beasley-Murray appears insensitive to potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel.

In his 1991 commentary on John published by Eerdmans, D. A. Carson dedicates one paragraph out of 104 pages of introduction to a discussion of potential anti-Judaism. He writes:

> It is not altogether surprising that he should use such strong language to denounce "the Jews"…John may well have an interest in driving a wedge between ordinary Jews and (at least) some of their leaders. The Fourth Gospel is not as anti-Jewish as some people think anyway: salvation is still said to be 'from the Jews (4:22), and often the referent of "the Jews" is "the Jews in Judea" or "the Jewish leaders" or the like. "Anti-Semitic" is simply the wrong category to apply to the Fourth Gospel: whatever hostilities are present turn on *theological* issues related to the acceptance or rejection of revelation, and not on race. How could it be, when all of the first Christians were Jews, and when on this reading, both the Fourth Evangelist and his readers were Jews? Those who respond to Jesus, whether Jews, Samaritans, or "other sheep" (10:16) to be added to Jesus' fold, are blessed; those who ignore him or reject him do so out of unbelief, disobedience (3:36) and culpable blindness (9:39–41).[571]

Historically Carson suggests that the polemic against "the Jews" in John stems from the intent of the Fourth Evangelist to drive a wedge between ordinary Jews and some of their leaders. Theologically, using language characteristic of Bultmann, Carson argues that the

[571] Carson, *The Gospel According to John,* 92.

hostilities in John are related to the acceptance or rejection of revelation. Carson does display knowledge of terms like anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism. He also acknowledges that some consider the Gospel to be anti-Jewish, although he dismisses this using John 4:22 (similar to Brown in 1966), the historical argument that the situation in John reflects an intra-Jewish dispute, and the definition of "the Jews" as Jewish leaders or Judeans. He argues at the end of the passage that ultimately the issue is not a Jewish or anti-Jewish one, but a universal one. Those who respond to Jesus will be blessed (Jews included) and those who reject Jesus can include non-Jews as well. While he has demonstrated an awareness of potential anti-Judaism in John, he does not caution his readers against adopting anti-Jewish attitudes.[572]

Also in 1991, John Ashton published his work on John entitled, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel.*[573] He recognizes the importance of the issue of the identity of "the Jews" by dedicating twenty-eight pages of his introductory material to the polemic against "the Jews" and eight to the question of who "the Johannine Jews" are. Ashton discusses this problem stating:

> Why does the evangelist, who never attempts to disguise the Jewishness of his hero, evince such hostility to his hero's people?... There are mysteries here and it is into these dark waters, the source horrifyingly, of so much Christian anti-Semitism, that we must venture in our search for the origins of this extraordinary book.

Ashton is keenly aware of the hostile sentiment in John directed towards "the Jews" and the role it has played in fostering Christian anti-Semitism. He concludes his investigation by saying:

> The hostility between the followers of Jesus and the Jews is at its most intense at precisely those points where Jesus is unambiguously claiming divine status. And we have seen too that the rows that break out over these claims are family rows: they concern what are in the first place internal disagreements within the broad spectrum of the faith of Israel…The smooth, rounded monotheism of Jewish

[572] Even when discussing hostile passages like John 8.

[573] See also his later collection of essays: John Ashton, *Studying John* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

> orthodoxy afforded as little purchase then as it would today for the claims that came to be made for Jesus.[574]

For Ashton, historically the situation in John reflects an intra-Jewish dispute where the Christological claims made about Jesus by the Johannine community were enough to warrant a threat to Jewish orthodoxy, and specifically monotheism. Brown also asserted this (the threat to monotheism) in *A Retreat With John the Evangelist* and *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*. While Ashton does not specifically address combating anti-Judaism, he has been clear regarding the negative potential of John.

Thomas Brodie's *The Gospel According to John*, published in 1993, argues that theologically "'the Jews' in John represent the world that rejects the revelation of God in Jesus."[575] He gives very little attention to "the Jews" or anti-Judaism in the introduction. However, when discussing John 1:19, he recognizes the potential problem of translating οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι as "the Jews" and suggests a translation that avoids the potential hostility. He states:

> The word for "Jews," *Ioudaioi*, may also be translated "Judeans," at term which has certain advantages: it omits any modern overtones of the word "Jews," it helps partly to save modern Jews from the negativity of the Gospel usage; it is closer in sound to the original *Ioudaioi*; it has an appropriate suggestion of provincialism; and like *Ioudaioi*, it is closer to the name "Judas" (*Ioudas*). The confrontation, therefore, may be described as being between John and the assembled Judeans.[576]

The above passage suggests that Brodie is aware of the potential problem of anti-Judaism in John. Similar to Malcolm Lowe, in his 1976 article, "Who were the Ἰουδαῖοι?"[577] Brodie suggests that "the Jews" should be rendered "Judeans." However, unlike Lowe who tries to argue that "Judeans" is the best translation for οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι for strictly

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[574] Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel*, 159.

[575] Thomas Brodie, *The Gospel According to John* (New York: Oxford, 1993), 39.

[576] Brodie, *The Gospel According to John*, 148.

[577] Malcolm Lowe, "Who Were the Ἰουδαῖοι?," *Novum Testamentum*, Vol. 18, Fasc. 2. (Apr., 1976), pp. 101-130. Lowe does not discuss hostilities or potential anti-Judaism in this article, although it is arguable that this entire endeavor was a strategy to navigate around anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John.

historical and philological reasons, Brodie emphasizes the practical and theological advantages of the translation.

Francis J. Maloney's commentary on John in the Sacra Pagina series was published in 1998. His approach is very close to Brown's.[578] In fact, when the time came for Brown's unfinished revision of the introduction of his Anchor Bible Commentary to be posthumously edited and published, [579] it was Maloney that was asked to do it. Within the first nine pages of his introduction, Maloney handles "the Jews" in John. In addition, this information has its own space within the Table of Contents. Recognizing the problem of hostility towards "the Jews" within the text, Maloney notes two extreme solutions. He says:

> Uncritical reading has led to two dangerous consequences directly related to the misunderstanding of what is meant by "the Jews" in the Fourth Gospel.
>
> 1) The Gospel of John has been accepted as the inspired and infallible Word of God that roundly condemns the Jewish people because of their rejection and eventual slaying of Jesus of Nazareth. For centuries this interpretation of the Fourth Gospel has legitimated some of the most outrageous behavior of European Christian people, including pogroms and the attempted genocide of the Holocaust.
>
> 2) It is also possible to come to a different, but equally damaging conclusion. It could be claimed that the language used to speak of the Jews is so violently anti-Semitic that the Fourth Gospel should not be used in today's Christian churches, that it is time to lay the Gospel of John quietly to rest.[580]

Maloney rejects both these options saying:

> There can be no wholesale rejection of the Fourth Gospel, as neither the condemnation and persecution of "the Jews" nor the elimination of the Gospel of John from Christian literature can claim to be based upon a correct reading of the Fourth Gospel.[581]

Addressing the historical situation of the Gospel, Maloney states:

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[578] Francis J. Maloney, *The Gospel of John* (Collegeville: Liturgical, 1998), 13–20.

[579] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John.*

[580] Maloney, *The Gospel of John*, 9.

[581] Maloney, *The Gospel of John*, 10.

> The conflicts between Jesus and "the Jews" are more the reflection of a Christological debate at the end of the first century than a record of encounters between Jesus and his fellow Israelites in the thirties of that century. *They do not accurately report the experience of the historical Jesus.*[582]

Continuing on, Maloney discusses John's use of the term "the Jews." He says:

> Jewish people as such are not represented by the term "the Jews," and the Fourth Gospel must not be read as if they were. Both "the Jews" and many members of the Johannine community were Jews, and the expression "the Jews" in the Gospel indicates those people who have taken up a theological and Christological position that rejects Jesus and the claims made for him by his followers.[583]

Contextualizing the hostilities in John by comparing it to a family row in a shared home,[584] Maloney states:

> Over the centuries since the appearance of the Fourth Gospel this text has been used violently to demolish one of the families in that row. This has greatly impoverished those who claimed to have unique rights to the home.[585]

Maloney like Brown, has clearly addressed the potential anti-Judaism in the text, but is also is unwilling to throw the text out. He, like Brown, would use the text, advocate a historical, critical reading of it, and aggressively combat the adoption of anti-Jewish hostility by his readers. Thus he carefully navigates between his awareness of potential anti-Judaism and his faith community who holds the text authoritative.

In his 1998 commentary in the Abingdon New Testament Commentary series, D. Moody Smith states:

> Clearly much of the Gospel arose out of a situation in which Jews and Christians—or better Jews who believed Jesus was the Christ and those who rejected his claim —were at loggerheads…. The obvious hostility towards

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[582] Maloney, *The Gospel of John*, 10. Emphasis on the last sentence is Maloney's.

[583] Maloney, *The Gospel of John*, 11.

[584] Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel,* 151: Maloney cites John Ashton here for the analogy.

[585] Maloney, *The Gospel of John*, 11.

> Judaism is not a function of their remoteness from one another but of a one-time close relationship gone sour.[586]

What Smith has described as the historical situation is a magnified hostility that erupted *because of* the once close relations between "the Jews" and the Johannine community. Similar to Ashton and Maloney, he has described almost a family dynamic. However, like Brown at this time, Smith suggests that while similar to an intra-Jewish relationship, the "divorce" has occurred in the past. Thus, by the time the Gospel is written, this is no longer an intra-Jewish debate, but one by those who are Jews, and those Christians who are no longer Jews. He continues by stating:

> Unfortunately this conflicted setting in which the Gospel arose had led to the author to refer to his own opponents, those of the disciples, and those of Jesus… as "the Jews." Doubtless they were, but Jesus (cf.4:9), John the Baptist, and the earliest circle of disciples were also Jews. It is a mistake, but a not unnatural one to assume that all Jews, then and now, are characterized as enemies of Jesus in the Gospel of John. The incipient conflict with Judaism in on a profound sense a conflict about biblical interpretation.[587]

Similar to Brown's 1998 assessment,[588] Smith asserts that the conflict between the Jews and the Johannine community was one of biblical interpretation. They were all Jews, but differed on how to interpret scripture, and how to regard Jesus. Smith addresses that equating all Jews with "the Jews" in John as the enemies of Jesus is a mistake. However, his handling of potential anti-Judaism is not as direct as Brown was in 1994 or 1998.

In his 1998 work, *The Gospel and the Letters of John*, Alan Culpepper includes a section on "Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John" under a larger heading entitled, "The Ethical Challenge." In it he describes a personal change of opinion that occurred for him, very similarly to what we saw happen with Raymond Brown. He explains how he used to use certain historical findings to navigate around potential anti-Judaism. While his opinion regarding these findings did not change, his approach to anti-Judaism has. Culpepper states:

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[586] D. Moody Smith, *John* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1999), 35.

[587] Smith, *John,* 45.

[588] Brown, *A Retreat with John the Evangelist*, 86.

> My own early responses to the charges that John is anti-Jewish and anti-Semitic were probably not unlike those of many others for whom the Gospel is a treasured book of scripture. I readily turned to counterarguments that John does not teach hatred of Jews: (1) it reflects a historical period in which there was tension within the synagogue and Jews and Christians were not clearly distinct; (2) Jesus and the disciples were all Jews, and the first Christians were Jews: and (3) the Gospel of John opposes not Jewishness but the response of unbelief… I still believe these points are correct, but they no longer constitute an adequate response.[589]

Dealing with both the historical interpretation of the situation in John and its modern effects Culpepper states:

> Even if the Greek term *hoi Ioudaioi* once denoted Judeans or the Jewish authorities, the Gospel of John generalized and stereotyped those who rejected Jesus by its use of this term and elevated the bitterness and hostility of the polemic to a new level. Perhaps even more important, the Fourth Gospel is the first document to draw a connection between the authorities who condemned Jesus and the Jews known to the Christian community at a later time. By means of this transfer of hostility, affected by merging events in the ministry of Jesus with the conflict with the synagogue in the time of the evangelist, the Gospel allowed and perhaps even encouraged Christians to read the Gospel in an anti-Semitic fashion. Christians after the Holocaust—and indeed in a time of resurgence of "ethnic cleansing" — can no longer ignore the role of anti-Jewish statements in John and elsewhere in the New Testament in inciting or justifying prejudice and violence against Jews.[590]

In an approach very similar to Brown's, Culpepper has not changed his biblical interpretation, but only how it is presented. Like Brown he thinks that interpretation is not enough, but clear response to potential anti-Judaism in the text, and the hostile effects the Gospel has had is of utmost importance. Interestingly enough, Culpepper credits his heightened awareness to his relationship with Jewish friends and scholars.[591]

Articles/Book Chapters on Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John

[589] R. Alan Culpepper, *The Gospel and the Letters of John,* 291–292. See: R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1983) for examples of Culpepper's earlier opinions.

[590] Culpepper, *The Gospel and the Letters of John,* 293.

[591] Culpepper, *The Gospel and the Letters of John,* 293. This is very similar to Brown's 1975 assessment.

The publication of Rosemary Reuther's *Faith and Fratricide* in 1979 represents a watershed event in the discussion of Christian anti-Judaism by presenting a relentless critique of how embedded these attitudes are in Christian theology. Like others she argues that the Jews in the Gospel of John are a "type" representing the "unbelievers."[592] However, far from using this as a strategy to mitigate the anti-Judaism in the text, Reuther demonstrates how this makes the anti-Judaism even worse. She goes on to say that "the Jews" in John are the very incarnation of the false, apostate principle of the fallen world, alienated from its true being in God.[593] She launches a direct attack on Rudolf Bultmann by arguing that that while modern exegetes have tried to demythologize the text,[594] the author of John actually intended to mythologize and to polarize the two communities. The Christians are the only ones who abide in the father, while "the Jews" are the children of the devil, and have never known the Father.[595] Reuther concludes her chapter on John saying:

> John gives the ultimate theological form to that diabolizing of "the Jews" which is the root of anti-Semitism in the Christian tradition. There is no way to rid Christianity of its anti-Judaism, which constantly takes social expression in anti-Semitism, without grappling finally with its Christological hermeneutic itself.[596]

Faith and Fratricide was not a commentary, but a work specifically designed to expose anti-Judaism in Christian tradition. It displays a heightened awareness in comparison to Brown and other John commentaries during the same period.

In 1979, the same year that *Community of the Beloved Disciple* was released, John Townsend's article, "The Gospel of John and the Jews: The Story of a Religious Divorce," [597] appeared in *AntiSemitism and the Foundations of Christianity*, collection of

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[592] Reuther, *Faith and Fratricide,*113.

[593] Reuther, *Faith and Fratricide,*113.

[594] Bultmann does not make the connection that this mythologizing in the Gospel has anti-Jewish affects in the real world, Reuther does.

[595] Reuther, *Faith and Fratricide,*116.

[596] Reuther, *Faith and Fratricide,*116.

[597] John Townsend, "The Gospel of John and the Jews: The Story of a Religious Divorce," in *AntiSemitism and the Foundations of Christianity* (ed. Alan T. Davies; New York: Paulist, 1979), 72–97.

articles all responding in some way to Rosemary Reuther's work.[598] This article addresses why many scholars interpret "the Jews" to be a stereotype. Townsend states:

> John tends to label all of Jesus' opponents "Jews"… The effect of this usage upon the reader is the implication that the Jews as a whole were enemies of Jesus. The Jews in John appear so evil that some exegetes believe them to be not simply Jews, but a symbol for the evil hostility of the world to God's revelation.[599]

Townsend's asserts his own opinion saying:

> A number of interpreters correctly point out that John is quite inconsistent in his use of "the Jews." These exegetes find that John has used "the Jews" in several senses.[600]

While Townsend explains many possible uses of "the Jews" (the world, authorities, etc.), he does not actually commit to one particular interpretation. However, similar to *Community*, Townsend offers a historical reconstruction of the Gospel, beginning with Jesus ministry and ending four stages later with a final redactor. He uses this historical reconstruction to explain that tensions between "the Jews" and the Johannine community are responsible for the hostility towards "the Jews" in John's Gospel. He says:

> The *Fourth Gospel* reflects the situation of the Johannine community both before and after its divorce from Judaism. In the earlier stages before the divorce, the Gospel betrays no denunciations of "the Jews." Now, after the divorce, "the Jews" have become the enemy.[601]

Townsend closes his article by saying:

> Unfortunately, the anti-Jewish teaching of the *Fourth Gospel* did not stop with its final redaction. John soon became one of the most influential writings in the early Church…Today we may learn to understand the anti-Jewish tenor of the Gospel as the unfortunate outgrowth of historical circumstances. Such understanding in

[598] Davies, *AntiSemitism and the Foundations of Christianity*, vii–xi.

[599] Townsend, "The Gospel of John and the Jews: The Story of a Religious Divorce," 74.

[600] Townsend, "The Gospel of John and the Jews: The Story of a Religious Divorce," 80.

[601] Townsend, "The Gospel of John and the Jews: The Story of a Religious Divorce," 88.

> itself, however, will not prevent the Gospel from continuing to broadcast its anti-Jewish message unabated.[602]

Having weighed all the various opinions, Townsend thinks the Gospel of John does have anti-Jewish elements. His direct communication to the reader displays his own awareness, and similar to Brown at the same time, he uses his historical reconstruction as way to account for the hostility in the text. However, he is clear that the historical situation does not excuse the hostility in the text, and he demonstrates his concern that the "anti-Jewish message" of the Gospel continues on beyond its historical origin.

In his 1992 essay "In Him Was Life," John McHugh states:

> I do not think the Fourth Gospel can be called polemically anti-Jewish. There is certainly a powerful and deep stream of apologetic directed towards those of the Jewish faith who might wish to understand how the new Christians looked at Jesus, but hostility in principle is too strong a word. Even in 7–11 where the debate is at its most heated, the evangelist continually reminds the reader that during the preaching of Jesus, the Jews of the day were divided and many believed in him. In these chapters, too, the Jewish actors are stylized rather than personalized, set up to speak their parts in the drama, a drama that was for the evangelist, more poignant than any Greek tragedy.[603]

McHugh asserts that since "the Jews" are stylized rather than personalized "types," the Gospel is not anti-Jewish. In fact, hostility would be too strong a word to describe the apologetic directed towards the Jews.

Printed in the same volume as McHugh's essay, J. D. G. Dunn argues in, "The Question of Anti-Semitism in the New Testament," Dunn states:

> And the fact that Jesus dies for "the people" as a necessity recognized by the High Priest, is given emphasis by being repeated (11:50, 18:14). Here again we can hardly speak of anti-Semitism or even anti-Jewish polemic. What lies behind these themes, as behind the whole treatment of "the Jews" is evidently a contest for the minds and hearts of the Jewish people, a contest which "the Jews"-the

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[602] Townsend, "The Gospel of John and the Jews: The Story of a Religious Divorce," 88.

[603] John McHugh, "In Him Was Life," in *Jews and Christians* (ed. J. D. G. Dunn; Grand Rapids: Erdmans, 1992), 158.

> Yavnean authorities seem to be winning, but a contest with the Fourth Evangelist has not yet given up as lost.[604]

Dunn argues that historically, the hostile language towards "the Jews" in John is present because the Gospel writer wants to win the hearts and minds of the Jewish people and in his attempt to do this he has launched an attack against the Yavnean authorities, equating "the Jews" with Jewish authorities. He says:

> For John it was still a debate within the bounds of pre-70 Judaism. John in his own perspective at least, is still fighting a factional battle within Judaism rather than launching his arrows from without, still a Jew who believed that Jesus was the messiah, son of God, rather than an anti-Semite. This suggests that in turn the dualism of John's polemic is a matter more of rhetoric rather than of calculated prejudice.[605]

Because the historical situation in John reflects an intra-Jewish dispute among Jews, the hostile language does not represent anti-Semitism or prejudice, but is a tool of rhetoric. The author of John wants to win the Jewish people to belief in Christ, and away from the Yavnean authorities. Displaying a concern that readers could adopt hostile attitudes, Dunn states:

> All this suggests that there is a grave danger of misreading John's treatment of "the Jews". The danger is of failing to appreciate the complexity of that treatment even when abstracted from the rest of the Gospel… It is clear beyond doubt that once the Fourth Gospel is removed from that context and the constraints of that context, it was all too easily read as an anti-Jewish polemic and became a tool of anti-Semitism. But it is highly questionable whether the Fourth Evangelist himself can fairly be indicted for either anti-Judaism or anti-Semitism.[606]

For Dunn, an understanding of the historical situation can solve the problem of perceived anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John. It is only reading the Gospel out of context that foster anti-Jewish attitudes. For him, the intra-Jewish nature of the situation in John combined with "the Jews" meaning Jewish authorities argues against the text being anti-Jewish. At

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[604] J. D. G. Dunn, "Anti-Semitism in the New Testament," in *Jews and Christians* (ed. J. D. G. Dunn; Grand Rapids: Erdmans, 1992), 202.

[605] Dunn, "Anti-Semitism in the New Testament," 201.

[606] Dunn, "Anti-Semitism in the New Testament," 201.

the same time he directly expresses concern about what he considers an anti-Jewish misreading of the situation.

In 1998, Adele Reinhartz argued in her article, "The Johannine Community and Its Jewish Neighbors":

> The largely negative portrayal of Jews and Judaism within the Gospel must therefore be grounded not in a specific experience but in the ongoing process of self-definition and the rhetoric which accompanies it… By explaining the Gospel's problematic portrayal of Jews as a consequence of the community's ongoing struggle for self-definition rather than as an external, Jewish act of expulsion removes responsibility for the anti-Jewish language from late first-century Jews or their authorities and restores it to the Johannine community, which embedded this portrayal in its formative text. While this shift may create discomfort for contemporary readers who deplore anti-Judaism yet uphold the sanctity of the Fourth Gospel, it may prove fruitful as a basis for examining the uses and abuses of language in the various communities to which we ourselves adhere.[607]

Reinhartz's concern is that by contextualizing the potential anti-Judaism in light of synagogue expulsion, the victims of the Johannine rhetoric ("the Jews") have become responsible for the hostility against them. Reinhartz instead interprets the hostility in the Gospel as one that resulted from the self-definition of the Johannine community, thus, making the author of John responsible for the hostile sentiments against "the Jews." Reinhartz' article has presented concerns that are unique among the other materials we have evaluated, thus showing the value of ecumenical dialogue between Christian and Jewish scholars, especially in works that are potentially anti-Jewish.[608]

In 1999, David Rensberger's article, "Anti Judaism in the Gospel of John,"[609] was published in the book *Anti-Judaism and the Gospels*. In it he says that in a qualified sense, he does not think the Gospel of John is anti-Jewish. He states:

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[607] Adele Reinhartz, "The Johannine Community and Its Jewish Neighbors," in *What is John: Volume II, Literary and Social Readings of the Fourth Gospel* (ed. Fernando F. Segovia; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 137–138.

[608] See also: Adele Reinhartz, "The Gospel of John: How "the Jews" Became Part of the Plot," in *Jesus, Judaism & Christian Anti-Judaism* (eds. Paula Fredriksen and Adele Reinhartz; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 99–116. While her opinion remains much the same as what is reflected here, her discussion is much more complex.

[609] David Rensberger, "Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John," in Anti-Judaism in the Gospels (ed. William Farmer; Harrisburg: Trinity Press, 1999), 120–157.

> John is at the point of separation between Christianity and Judaism. This means that it is still Jewish enough for its language to be viewed as sectarian protest, but no longer Jewish enough to remain in this category for long.[610]

Rensberger sees the situation in John as a still being an intra-Jewish dispute but one that is on the verge of a split. He has implicitly suggested that "the Jews" in John are authorities, and the voice of John is one of a small group in disagreement with its leaders. Because both sides of the Johannine dispute identify themselves as Jews, and Rensberger does not think the intent of the Fourth Evangelist was to incriminate the Jews in general, the Gospel for him is not anti-Jewish. He states:

> The Jewish author of John certainly meant to say that the Jewish religious authorities in his locale were failing to acknowledge a divine revelation, indeed the ultimate divine revelation, and he meant to censure them harshly for this He did not mean however to claim that Jewish in general were demonic haters of God. This is what I mean by answering a qualified no to the question of John's anti-Judaism. And yet John's language is so hateful and its consequences have been so abhorrent that the answer to this question almost seems irrelevant. I do not believe that the fourth evangelist intended to slander other Jews in a way that would endanger Jewish lives and the Jewish religion itself for centuries to come; but that has nevertheless been the result of his writing. [611]

It is clear that while Rensberger has argued that historically, the author of John was not anti-Jewish, it is not because of unawareness or strategizing on his part. He has clearly addressed the negative impact of the Gospel on the lives of Jews, displaying sensitivity towards potential anti-Judaism.

Brown's Work in Context

This survey of Johannine scholarship has demonstrated that while historical analysis is a tool that almost all commentators used to ground their opinions, their utilization of the historical findings yielded varying results, and their sensitivity to modern ethical concerns was independent of their historical analysis. This becomes

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[610] Rensberger, "Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John," 143.

[611] Rensberger, "Anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John," 143.

evident when we examine the ways that these scholars have explained the historical situation behind the Gospel of John and who they think "the Jews" are, and what they do with this information. In order to place Brown in the context of scholars working in the same period, we will now compare how he employs and, indeed comes to critique the various strategies used to mitigate the anti-Jewish elements in the Gospel.

"The Jews" as Jewish/Jerusalem Authorities

Barrett and Schnackenburg[612] both asserted that "the Jews" meant Jerusalem/Jewish authorities. Barrett in 1955 did not display any concern for contemporary ethical issues regarding anti-Judaism, nor did he use his historical analysis to assert that the Gospel was or was not anti-Jewish. This is different from Schnackeburg in 1968 whose analysis was more complex, suggesting that while the Gospel used "the Jews" to refer to the Jewish leaders, historically the author was placing the responsibility for the unbelief of the people upon the authorities.[613] Schnackenberg, along with Kysar, Beasley-Murray, Dunn, and Rensberger (who also defined "the Jews" as authorities)[614] combined this historical analysis with the theological interpretation that "the Jews" in the Gospel are types representing unbelief and general hostility towards Jesus. [615] The fact that they need to posit a theological interpretation as well as a historical one suggests that claiming that "the Jews" only represent the authorities does not adequately address the problem of anti-Judaism.

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[612] Lindars argued this as well athough it was secondary to his definition of "the Jews" as Judeans.

[613] Schnackenburg does not explain this in detail. What he implies is that in actuality, it was not just the authorities that rejected Jesus, but the people as well. What is odd is that "the Jews" in itself is not a term that suggests authorities. Presumably what Schanackenburg is suggesting is that the context of many references to "the Jews" suggests authorities, however he does not clarify.

[614] Kysar says that "the Jews" refer to the religious authorities and a wider class of opponents. Bruce actually uses the wording "religious establishment in Jerusalem." Beasley-Murray says that "the Jews" denotes Jewish leaders, especially Pharisees) in their opposition to Jesus and his followers. Dunn specifies that these are the Yavnean authorities, and Rensberger calls them the Jewish religious authorities. Lindars acknowledges that there are specific places where "the Jews" are authorities, but he prefers the overall definiton that they inhabitants of Judea.

[615] Schnackenburg uses the historical situation to mediate the potential anti-Judaism by arguing that while anti-Judaism can been seen in the text, is because of the contemporary situation of the Johannine author.

"The Jews" as the Jewish/Jerusalem authorities is something that Brown struggled with throughout his writings. In 1960, like Barrett, Brown simply equated "the Jews" with the authorities. If potential anti-Judaism was a concern for Barrett (1955) or Brown (1960), they seemed to be content with the explanation of "Jews" as authorities to solve the problem. By 1966, this explanation was no longer sufficient for Brown. While most of the other commentators we evaluated combined the historical explanation of "the Jews" as authorities with the theological explanation that the Jews represented hostility and unbelief, Brown explained that "the Jews" had different meanings depending on the context, and that the reason the author used the term "the Jews" was because he was thinking of the Jews from his own time and imported the term back into the Gospel story. Thus, he relied again on historical context to solve the problem of "the Jews." Throughout the rest of his writing career on John, Brown would continue to interpret some uses of "the Jews" in John as the authorities, but he would clarify that in those specific cases the context implies an authority group. Brown's general description of "the Jews" expanded and instead of being limited to the authorities, "the Jews" became all those who were hostile to Jesus.[616]

"The Jews" as a Stereotype

While Schnackenburg argued that historically the "Jews" were the Jewish/Jerusalem authorities, he argued that theologically they are "representatives of unbelief and the world hostile to God."[617] However, while Schackenburg does not utilize his historical or theological analyses for modern ethical purposes, Kysar uses this

[616] This again shows Brown's propensity towards the historical as opposed to the theological or theoretical. While Kysar and others supplemented their definition of "the Jews" as authorities with the theological understanding that "the Jews" represented the general idea of hostility towards Jesus and served as a stereotype of unbelief, Brown has sought a more historical solution. "The Jews" are not a stereotype of unbelief, but literally those individuals that were hostile to Jesus. Interestingly enough, by the time of his death in 1998, Brown had written in *A Retreat With John the Evangelist*, that "the Jews" were in fact a "type" representing those hostile to Jesus.

[617] George Beasley-Murray agreed on both points as well, that "the Jews" were the Jewish authorities (especially the Pharisees), but they came to represent the Godless world in opposition to God. However, Beasley-Murray does not address potential anti-Judaism or modern concerns. Morris also agrees that "the Jews" signify the "aspect of hostility to Jesus." However, he also does not discuss this in regard to potential anti-Judaism.

analysis to argue that the Gospel is not anti-Jewish since "the Jews" are a stereotype and do not represent real people. McHugh goes as far as to suggest that not only is anti-Jewish inappropriate terminology to describe the Gospel, but hostility might even be too strong to describe the Gospel's apologetic. He argues that, "the Jewish actors are stylized rather than personalized." Interestingly enough, Rosemary Reuther comes to the same theological conclusions as Schackenburg, Kysar, and McHugh. However, rather than mediate the ethical concern, for Reuther, this analysis only makes it worse.[618] She argues that John's choice of "the Jews" to represent "the apostate principle of the fallen world" is deliberate, and this "diabolizing" of "the Jews" is the root of anti-Semitism.[619] This is an example of where different scholars, coming to the same historical and theological understanding of the text, arrive at very different ethical conclusions.

In *A Retreat With John the Evangelist* (1998), Brown also argued that "the Jews" were a type, representing those who were hostile to Jesus, in much the same way that Kysar did. However, Brown combined that with a historical reconstruction of why there is hostility in the Gospel as well as a direct address to his readers in the first person voice of John to combat anti-Jewish attitudes. Thus, it was his historical and theological conclusions, combined with his direct address to his readers that constituted Brown's distinctive sensitivity towards potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel.

Intra-Jewish Dispute

Carson, Ashton, Smith, and Townsend all argue that the situation in John reflects an intra-Jewish dispute. Carson uses this analysis to argue that John is not anti-Jewish. In fact, because all the parties of the dispute are Jewish, the disagreement is not about "race", but about "acceptance or rejection of revelation" (of Jesus). Ashton uses the analogy of a family row, and similarly argues that the issue in John is an internal disagreement over whether to accept or reject Jesus. However, Ashton argues that the hostility peaks in the very places that Jesus asserts divinity. Thus, he tries to understand

[618] Culpepper argues similarly to Reuther, that the generalization and stereotyping of "the Jews" as hostile has elevated the anti-Judaism instead of mediating it.

[619] Reuther, *Faith and Fratricide*, 116; Reuther does not conflate the terms anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, but understands anti-Semitism as the social expression of anti-Judaism.

the Jewish point of view that would interpret Johannine community acceptance of Jesus as divine thus representing a direct threat to monotheism.[620] Smith's argument is slightly different. He argues that the hostility in John reflects an intra-Jewish dispute that ended in division. The Gospel was written after this division occurred and because of this, the hostility is magnified.[621] Townsend, similar to Smith, states that it is the "once close relationship gone sour" that has caused the heightened hostility that we see displayed in the Gospel. While his historical analysis is similar to the other three scholars, his address to the reader is more direct. He argues that, "understanding the historical situation does not prevent the Gospel from continuing to broadcast its anti-Jewish message." Rensberger, like Smith and Townsend, also argues for an intra-Jewish situation that "is still Jewish enough for its language to be viewed as a sectarian protest, but no longer Jewish enough to remain in this category for long." However Rensberger also combines this with an address regarding potential anti-Judaism where he clarifies for his reader that he does not think the author of John intended "to slander other Jews in a way that would endanger Jewish lives and the Jewish religion for centuries to come, but that has been the result of his writing." It is the combination of their historical analysis and with their direct address that displays Rensberger and Townsend's concern for potential anti-Judaism. While all these authors came to similar historical conclusions, how it affected their approach to potential anti-Judaism and modern ethical concerns is quite different.

On multiple occasions Brown has also suggested that the hostility in John displays an intra-Jewish dispute, reminding his readers that Jesus was a Jew, and the Johannine community began as Jews (although according to Brown, later Samaritans were added).[622] However, similar to Smith, Brown came to the point where he saw the split between the community of John and "the Jews" as being in the past from the perspective of the Gospel. The hostility depicted in the Gospel is the result of this split from the

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[620] Brown discusses the threat to monotheism both in *A Retreat With John the Evangelist* and *Points de vue divers sur les juifs dans Jean*.

[621] This is vague. Smith does not specify what specific interpretation the Jews and the Johannine community argued over. Presumably it has something to do with Jesus' divine claims, but Smith does not specify. Smith also asserts that the Gospel characterizes "the Jews" as the enemies of Jesus.

[622] When discussing Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman in his 1966 publication, Brown disagreed with Bultmann's position which saw Jesus speaking as a Christian and not as a Jew.

parent community. The Johannine community no longer saw themselves as Jews, making the dispute no longer intra-Jewish. However, even before he came to this understanding, Brown did not use his intra-Jewish analysis to argue against the Gospel being anti-Jewish. As early as 1966, he used it to contextualize passages and communicate to the reader that they cannot adopt hostile attitudes from the text, because the hostile statements were made in a very specific context that no longer exists.[623]

Expulsion from the Synagogue

A related scenario that Brown and Louis Martyn used to contextualize the Gospel was the idea that Christians were expelled from the synagogue (John 9 and 16:2). Brown relied on this theory from as early as 1966 until he died 1998. The Johannine community has been expelled from the Synagogue and because of that situation, the Gospel displays hostility towards "the Jews." In 1966, similar to the way he handles the intra-Jewish dispute Brown does not use this situation to argue that the Gospel is or is not anti-Jewish (although he does argue it is not anti-Semitic). He simply uses this information to contextualize the hostility. In 1975, he combines the contextualization with a direct address to his readers, arguing that they cannot adopt similar hostility, nor can the excise the offensive passages. Instead, they must learn to read scriptures in context, and without assuming that everything in the Bible is to be imitated. It is interesting to note that Brown differed from Martyn in that Brown did not think "the Jews" were actually putting the Johannine Christians to death (16:2). He argued that by expelling them from the synagogue, the Jewish-Christians became subject to Roman persecution.

Adele Reinhartz, like Brown and Martyn, explores the Synagogue expulsion theory. However, she raises the unique concern that by using this theory to contextualize the Gospel of John, the hostility in the Gospel is not mitigated, but instead "the Jews" become responsible for the hostile sentiments directed towards themselves in the Gospel. She, like Brown, thinks Christians should come to terms with the hard things in their scriptures so that similar attitudes are not perpetuated in the modern day. However, while Reinhartz is clear about her concern for "the Jews," Brown takes a middle position

[623] Example John 8 from 1966.

displaying both a concern for "the Jews" and a desire to explain the hostility of the biblical text without dismissing it.

Neutral or Positive Statements about "the Jews"

Many commentators point to the fact that there are a number of neutral and even positive statements about "the Jews" in the Gospel of John. Among them the most frequently cited is John 4:22, "Salvation is from the Jews." Carson uses this as strategy to mitigate the potential anti-Judaism in the text by saying, "The Fourth Gospel is not as anti-Jewish as some people think anyway: salvation is still said to be 'from the Jews (4:22)."[624]

Brown in 1966 uses this same strategy by rather awkwardly appending John 4:22 to his analysis of the hostility in John 8. He states, "Lest the picture seem too dark, we must remember that this same Fourth Gospel records the saying of Jesus that salvation comes from the Jews (4:22)."[625] While verse does not play an important role in Brown's later writing, he does use it to demonstrate the Jewish nature of the Johannine Jesus as late as 1997 in *Points de vue diverse sur les juifs dans Jean*. The implication in 1966 is that this is a not very well developed strategy to provide some counterweight to the overwhelmingly negative use of "the Jews" elsewhere in the Gospel. While Brown does not utilize this verse in the same way in *Points de vue diverse sur les juifs dans Jean*, it is interesting to note that when the Pontifical Biblical Commission drew upon Brown's work, they did.[626]

"The Jews" as Judeans

Some scholars prefer to translate οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι as Judeans rather than "the Jews." Lowe demonstrated in his article "Who Were the Ἰουδαῖοι?" how he thought this was the best historical translation. Others like Brodie have recognized the how using Judeans

[624] Carson, *The Gospel According to John,* 92.

[625] Brown, *The Gospel According to John I–XII*, 368.

[626] "About the Jews, the Fourth Gospel has a very positive statement, made by Jesus himself in the dialogue with the Samaritan woman: 'Salvation comes from the Jews (Jn 4:22)."

instead of "the Jews" can help mitigate the potential anti-Judiasm in John. As early as 1975, Brown rejected this strategy. He states:

> Here I must beg the reader's indulgence for an aside. One cannot disguise a hostility toward "the Jews" in the Johannine passion narrative, neither by softening the translation to "Judeans" or "Judaists," nor by explaining that John often speaks of "the Jews" when the context implies that the authorities (i.e., the chief priests) alone were involved. By deliberately speaking of "the Jews" the fourth evangelist is spreading to the Synagogue of his own time the blame that an earlier tradition placed on the authorities.[627]

He saw the use of Judeans as an attempt to soften the hostile intent of the author of John. This opinion did not change and can be seen again in *Introduction to the Gospel of John*.[628]

Anti-Judaism Imbedded in the Text

A number of the scholars we evaluated displayed some level of concern regarding potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel. While some of these scholars used their various historical analyses to mitigate anti-Judaism in the text,[629] others used it to argue that anti-Judaism is imbedded in the text and cannot be separated from it. Rosemary Reuther and John Townsend are examples of the latter. What is at stake is the modern ethical concern of contemporary anti-Jewish attitudes that are fostered by the biblical text.

Culpepper, Maloney, and Brown approach the text without attempting to cover up its anti-Jewish hostility, but without devaluing its importance for the Church community or suggesting that it be dismissed. Culpepper states that the Fourth Gospel is the first document to link the authorities that condemned Jesus, with Jews of a later time. Thus, "this Gospel has encouraged Christians to read the text in an anti-Semitic fashion." Maloney clearly states that over the centuries the Fourth Gospel has been used to

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[627] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 130.

[628] Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 166.

[629] Kysar argued that the Evangelist did not have an "anti-Semitic" motive in mind… but the casting of "the Jews" as characters was a strategy for telling the story. Carson said that because "salvation is said to come from the Jews" and "the Jews" often refers to Judeans or Jewish leaders, the Gospel is not anti-Jewish.

"demolish" the Jews. However, Maloney argues that, "neither the condemnation and persecution of 'the Jews' nor the elimination of the Gospel of John from Christian literature can claim to be based upon a correct reading of the Fourth Gospel."[630] Brown also argues for an accurate and historical reading of the biblical text without "whitewashing" it, adopting the hostile attitudes in it, or dismissing it as no longer valuable to the Church. What makes Brown so unique among all these biblical scholars surveyed, even Culpepper and Maloney is 1) his commitment both to historical criticism and the continuing value of the Gospel of John, 2) his direct handling of the potential anti-Judaism in the text and the early date that he began to do this in comparison to others, and 3) the way he impartially reports historical events without passing judgment on the first century communities.

The Relationship Between Raymond Brown's Historical Analysis and His Sensitivity to Potential Anti-Judaism

In chapter one, we discussed Brown's dedication to historical critical methods. During the years when the leadership of Catholic Church was debating whether or not biblical criticism should be utilized by its scholars, Brown was at the forefront championing its use. As his awareness of potential anti-Judaism grew, Brown saw critical interpretation of the Bible as vital to combating hostile attitudes. In 1966,[631] Brown used historical analysis to explain the hostility in the text. In the subsequent years, his reliance on historical analysis never waned, however, he began to combine it with direct addresses to his readers to combat anti-Jewish attitudes in the present. As early as 1975, Brown expressed his distaste for excising passages that might foster hostile attitudes. Brown thought that the historical truth was important, regardless of the findings. For conservatives in the Church, this could be disconcerting as Brown argued that some events in the Gospel did not happen as the Gospel claims they did.[632] For others, such as

[630] Maloney, *The Gospel of John*, 10.

[631] The second publication we evaluated, and the first post Vatican II publication we evaluated.

[632] Some of these events happened decades later in the time of the Fourth Evangelist, and some of these events may not have happened at all.

John Dominic Crossan, Brown could be equally offensive by arguing that certain things *did* occur historically (i.e. Jewish involvement in the crucifixion of Jesus).

Early on Brown believed that a proper reading of the Gospel in its appropriate historical context could provide the best resources for addressing anti-Judaism. This involves two aspects. The first is understanding the historical context behind the hostile passages. In this area especially, historical criticism is essential to uncovering the truth of what really happened. The second but equally important aspect of historical study is the recognition that the Bible is not to always historically accurate. In addition, because the Bible often reflects attitudes that had a specific context and are no longer relevant, it can not always be used to prescribe attitudes and behaviors in the present. For Brown, modern Christian anti-Judaism that comes from hostile attitudes in the Bible stems from improper biblical interpretation and appropriation. This is evident in his 1975 article where he draws upon *Dei Verbum*, the Vatican II document that addresses Catholic biblical interpretation, rather than *Nostra Aetate*, the Vatican II document that deals with proper attitudes towards the Jews. *Dei Verbum* states, "The books of Scripture must be acknowledged as teaching firmly, faithfully and without error that truth which God wanted to put into sacred writings for the sake of our salvation."[633] This statement allows Brown to say in that same publication that, "it is a fallacy that what one hears in the Bible is always to be imitated because it is 'revealed' by God"[634] Brown continues by saying, "Christian believers must wrestle with the limitations imposed on the Scriptures." and "they must be brought to see that some attitudes found in the Scriptures, however explicable in the times in which they originated, may be wrong attitudes if repeated today." His solution was to continue to read the text as we have it, then to preach forcefully that such a hostility between Christian and Jew cannot be continued today.[635]

In *Death of the Messiah,* written toward the end of his career, Brown refused to dulcify the historical evidence in such a way as to minimize anti-Jewish hostility. The

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[633] *Dei Verbum*

[634] Brown, "The Passion According to John: Chapters 18 and 19," 131.

[635] Brown argued this again in *Community of the Beloved Disciple* in 1979 where he says, "I cannot see how it helps contemporary Jewish-Christian relationships to disguise the fact that such an attitude once existed."

theological attempt to make Jewish responsibility irrelevant by saying that Jesus died for all sin does not solve the historical problem. However, attempting to solve the historical problem by saying that there was no Jewish involvement in the Passion is not helpful because in Brown's opinion, the historical evidence does not warrant this. Brown's investment in an accurate historical analysis has modern relevance because he believes that, "if we can more clearly perceive and understand those 1st cent. attitudes, we may be able to judge our own attitudes and self-justifications."[636] As a result, even historical analysis that leads to conclusions that portray the first-century disputes negatively can be useful in the present to combat anti-Judaism. However, while Brown always relied heavily on historical biblical criticism, he eventually began to see it as insufficient for addressing the problem of potential anti-Judaism.

Many of the strategies that other commentators used to explain anti-Judaism in the text are strategies that Brown employed at one time or another.[637] Early in his career he argued that "the Jews" were the Jewish authorities. By the time he wrote *A Retreat With John the Evangelist*, Brown still employed most of the historical analysis that he had used during the thirty-eight years of his career on John. "The Jews" still represented the Jewish authorities in some places, and they were a "type" representing hostility to Jesus. The synagogue-expulsion theory still played a big part in contextualizing the Gospel's hostility. However, none of these theories were enough to address the modern ethical concerns. Thus, Brown addressed his reader directly for this purpose.

It is Alan Culpepper's explanation of his own "journey" towards anti-Jewish awareness that helps inform on this situation. Culpepper explained how he had previously used interpretive strategies to navigate around potential anti-Judaism in the Gospel. However he had come to the opinion that this was no longer an adequate solution. While his historical analysis and biblical interpretation did not change, Culpepper discussed how his need to comment more aggressively against potential anti-Judaism in the text has grown over time. Robert Kysar's publications demonstrate a similar transition over time. In 1976 he used his interpretation of "the Jews" suggest that John is not anti-Semitic arguing that, "The casting of the Jews as the symbol of unbelief was a tragic accident of

[636] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 386.

[637] The exception to this is "the Jews" as Judeans.

history." In his 2005 book, *Voyages With John*, Kysar still explains the hostility of the text by giving historical context by saying,

> Oddly enough, the community that was founded on the sacrifice of an innocent person for their salvation, now sacrificed their former Jewish brothers and sisters for the sake of self-identity. The historical origin of John makes its anti-Semitic tone understandable – and some would even say excusable. However as one reads and hears the gospel read, the historical origin of the document does not alert its basic tone.[638]

However, what makes his work sensitive to potential anti-Judaism is this interpretation *combined* with an address directed at the reader that makes it clear that the Johannine attitude is unacceptable in the present. Kysar does this by saying,

> The fact remains that there was a group towards which the evangelist and possibly the Johannine churches felt this kind of intense disdain. What would compel such a depiction? We cannot answer this question with any certainty. What needs to be said however is that pushed to the wall, the Fourth Evangelist chose to blame this group for Jesus' death and equate them with offspring of the devil, thus claiming there was nothing of worth, no truth in them or their views. An ethics of interpretation requires us to name such a posture toward "another,' who was different from the Christians and posed a significant threat to them. In a word, it is deplorable and inexcusable![639]

With Culpepper, Kysar, and Brown, while they have relied on historical criticism in their interpretation of John, they combine their interpretation with direct statements that communicate that the attitudes directed towards "the Jews" in John are wrong if adopted today.[640]

What makes Brown unique is that in comparison to most[641] of the scholars we evaluated, Brown's writings display a heightened awareness years before most other scholars. Only Reuther, Townsend, Reinhartz, and Culpepper addressed the reader in the

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[638] Robert Kysar, *Voyages With John* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2005), 156–157.

[639] Kysar, *Voyages With John,* 230.

[640] In the case of Kysar, he went as far as to say that the attitudes were wrong even during the time that the Gospel was written.

[641] Schnackenburg's 1968 opinion was very close to Brown's 1966 opinion, and Reuther and Townsend displayed awareness to anti-Judaism at early dates. Maloney and Brown had very close opinions as well.

didactic tone that Brown employs for the purpose of combating anti-Judaism. The combination of Brown's historical approach to the text with his unrelenting desire to expose the hostile attitudes and combat potential anti-Judaism is unmatched by other commentators. I believe this is the key to understanding Brown's sensitivity to "the Jews" the Gospel of John.

Although it is hard to gauge precisely, it appears that an important factor in Brown's realization that interpretive strategies that rely in historical analysis are not enough to combat potential anti-Judaism is his interaction with Jewish colleagues and students. I believe this is a large factor in Brown's growing awareness as well. It was after his move to Union Theological Seminary in 1970 and his regular interaction with Jewish friends and colleagues from Jewish Theological Seminary that Brown's writings displayed one of his major shifts. It was in his small 1975 article that he first used the term "anti-Jewish" in relation to John. It was also here that he addressed the relationship between and how one interprets the Bible and the adoption of hostile attitudes from the text, thus defining Brown's unique position for the rest of his career.

While John Dominic Crossan critiqued Brown his approach to the anti-Jewish issue in the Passion narratives, he has not fully appreciated Brown's unique position. Unlike other scholars that displayed a heightened awareness to anti-Judaism, Brown demonstrated a desire to understand both the Jewish point of view and that of the Johannine community, but he refrained from judging either side. In *Death of the Messiah*, Brown states,

> I would not dare to justify or condemn the attitudes either of 1st-cent. Christians or of their opponents, about whose motives and consciences we are ill informed. However, if we can more clearly perceive and understand those 1st cent. attitudes, we may be able to judge our own attitudes and self-justifications.[642]

In his critique of Brown, Crossan correctly notes in *Who Killed Jesus* that Brown was cautious; He did not rush to conclusions and very rarely asserted certainty in his historical reconstructions. However, Crossan's position does not do justice to the powerful way Brown has continually addressed the problem of anti-Judaism in the Gospels.

[642] Brown, *Death of the Messiah*, 386.

Of the scholars we evaluated that wrote comprehensive works on John, Brown began dealing with anti-Judaism the earliest (as early as 1970). His sensitivity towards anti-Judaism in John grew consistently since the beginning of his career (1960). It involves both his biblical interpretation, which has sought historical answers for the Johannine hostility towards "the Jews" and his direct addresses to the reader that combat potential anti-Judaism among his readers without actually judging the first-century community.

Because of Brown's utilization of Catholic statements, and his identity first a Catholic and secondly a biblical scholar, Brown has been able to represent the Catholic Church as a leader in the fight against anti-Judaism, both in biblical interpretation, and in general attitudes. As he grew more prominent in his scholarship, he became a significant voice in leadership, contributing to the formation of official Church statements. In his own careful yet truly committed way, he not only deeply influenced a generation of Catholic scholars, but has provided the resources for people of all perspectives to address the problem of anti-Judaism in the New Testament.

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